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CHRIST'S SECOND COMING·

WILL IT BE PRE-MILLENNIAL?

BY THE

REV. DAVID BROWN, A.M.,

ST. JAMES' FREE CHURCH, GLASGOW.

> QUA PROPTER, QUI DICIT DOMINUM CITIUS ESSE VENTURUM OPTABILIUS LOQUITUR, SED PERICULOSIUS FALLITUR. UTINAM ERGO SIT VERUM; QUIA ERIT MOLESTUM SI NON VERUM QUI AUTEM DICIT DOMINUM TARDIUS ESSE VENTURUM, ET TAMEN CREDIT, SPERAT, AMAT EJUS ADVENTUM, PROFECTO DE TARDITATE EJUS ETIAMSI FALLITUR, FELICITER FALLITUR HABEBIT ENIM MAJOREM PATIENTIAM, SI HOC ITA ERIT; MAJOREM LÆTITIAM SI NON ERIT. AC PER HOC, AB EIS QUI DILIGUNT MANIFESTATIONEM DOMINI ILLE AUDITUR SUAVIUS, ISTI CREDITUR TUTIUS.—AUGUSTIN, EPIST. CXCIX.

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PREFACE.

In sending forth a New Edition of this Volume, I would devoutly acknowledge the favourable reception given to the first. The communications received from England, Ireland, and America, as well as from different parts of Scotland, leave no room to doubt that it has found its way to the parties for whom it was chiefly designed, and accomplished to a considerable extent the objects for which it was undertaken; and believing, as I profoundly do, that the doctrine maintained in this book is in harmony with the mind of God as revealed in his word, I have felt the obligation which its acceptance imposes to make the present edition as perfect as possible.

I will not trouble the reader with explanations of the tardy appearance of this edition, after the book has been so long out of print, and a reprint repeatedly called for. So long as replies to it were issuing from the press—and the last of them has not been many months before the public—it would scarcely have been respectful to send it forth again just as it was.

Independently of this, the stated calls of a city charge, so unfavourable for continued labour in any field but its own, have occasioned numerous interruptions, the effect of which, in an occasional oversight,* and a tendency in some places to repetition—not easily avoided when at times one is compelled to write by snatches—the reader will perhaps kindly excuse. For the same reason I venture to ask the indulgence of my esteemed opponents, should I have omitted to notice any thing of consequence advanced by them. I think I have not;—indeed if I have erred at all, most readers will think it is on the other side: but so extensive is the ground, and so endless are the details into which one is apt to be drawn in handling this question, that when confining myself, as I found it indispensable to do, to the leading points under each successive head, it is possible that I may not have noticed every thing which is thought to have force on the other side. No one, however, can fail to see that the question is suspended upon the points on which I have chiefly dwelt.

With regard to the alterations, omissions, and additions in this edition, they are so numerous that it would be difficult to specify them. In order to make room for the large additions which the present state of the controversy had rendered necessary, I have omitted every thing which I thought could be spared without injuring the main argument, as also, with certain exceptions, whatever might be questioned by those who are at one with me on the principal points of the controversy. In some cases I have done this with reluctance, having seen no reason to change my mind on the points and passages referred to; but as large omissions were indispensable in the view of so much additional matter, it was plain that these were the places where they ought to be made. Another expedient for saving space has been to throw into foot-notes whatever could be spared from the text, and to print in small type the numerous extracts from authors on both sides, and such quotations from Scripture as are brought forward as proofs. In point of arrangement, I think the book considerably improved; all that belongs distinctively to the subject of the Millennium being separated from what relates more strictly to the Second Advent, and such Objections as did not seem to fall naturally under any of the points discussed in these two divisions, being put by themselves at the end. The matter thus falls asunder of itself into Three Parts—The Second Advent; The Millennium; Objections. Most of the Second Part, and not a little of Part First, is new; and while every paragraph has been carefully revised, a full half of the whole appears now for the first time. One omission, inadvertently made in the first edition, has been amply supplied in this. By means of the full Table of Contents, the General Index, the Index of Texts, and Index of Authors, the reader, it is hoped, will have no difficulty in finding any thing he wishes to turn to in the volume. An apology is due here to the scholar for the absence of all but the *circumflex* and the *aspirate* in the Greek—a plan hastily adopted at first, to save trouble in correcting the press, and continued, after its awkwardness was fully perceived, only for uniformity's sake.

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* As—p. 210, note, lines 2, 3 (but these only), for which I have to crave Mr. Elliott's indulgence—the eye having caught for the moment a different chapter.

The replies with which I have been favoured are not few. In addition to a small tract by Mr. Wood, a volume by Mr. Scott, a chapter of the sixth edition of Mr. Bickersteth's "Signs of the Times," the Duke of Manchester has honoured me with a pretty full reply, in a lengthened appendix to his "Finished Mystery;" Mr. A. Bonar has published "Redemption Drawing Nigh" in reply to me; and Mr. H. Bonar, besides the reference to my book, though not by name, throughout the greater part of his "Prophetical Landmarks," has reviewed it in three long articles in the *Presbyterian Review*, and, since the cessation of that periodical, has embodied the substance of these articles, with very large additions, in a volume issued a few months since, entitled, "The Coming and Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ; being an Examination of the Work of the Rev. D. Brown on the Second Coming of the Lord."* From some of these replies I have received valuable hints, particularly from the Duke of Manchester's volume, in which a close and acute study of Scripture is observable. I have endeavoured to weigh every argument in these replies dispassionately, and I fondly hope I have not transgressed the limits of Christian courtesy in my remarks on them. Some expressions in the former edition, which have been objected to on this ground, I have expunged; others, even after they were printed, have been altered, lest they should convey to the reader more than they were meant to express; and if once or twice I have used strong language in reference to the startling, and, as it appeared to me, perilous ground which some are prepared to occupy in defence of their theory, it has been with the single and well-weighed purpose of marking the feeling which I think such speculations *ought* to awaken, and I claim from the esteemed brethren to whom these remarks apply, the credit of being actuated by no unbrotherly feeling toward themselves.

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* The titles of the works quoted are given, once at least, with sufficient fulness for reference. Up to p. 180, the references to "Mr. H. Bonar" are to his "Landmarks;" after that, his recent book having only then appeared, the references are to it.

On the mode of conducting this investigation, some remarks have been made by Mr. H. Bonar, in the Preface to his last work, which, as they affect the whole structure of this volume, and may prejudice some against it by whom he is justly respected, I shall be excused for noticing here. Mr. Bonar would arrange not only his own materials, but mine too. On such matters hardly two people are found exactly to agree. That my plan is abstractly the best I am so far from affirming, that if I were free to follow my own taste, it would be perfectly different from what it is. It is because I thought the method actually adopted the most suitable for embracing all the multifarious aspects of the question in a luminous manner, and with some degree of completeness under each head, that I selected it. Mr. Bonar should, at least, have correctly reported what my plan was, which he is far from having done. He represents me as occupying the first half of my book with "the *inferential* and *theological difficulties* of the pre-millennial scheme, leaving its *scripturalness* to the last."* The answer to this is more simple than pleasant—It is not the fact. I prove, for example, from Scripture, that the Church, in the most absolute sense of that term, will be completed when Christ comes; and so the theory which tells us that it will not, inasmuch as a large portion of Christ's redeemed people will have to be converted, trained and perfected *after* he comes—is unscriptural. I hardly think it right to treat this as a mere "inferential" argument—a "theological difficulty." Again, I prove from Scripture that the Resurrection and the Judgment of all mankind will be simultaneous; and so the theory which breaks up both of these into fragments, separated by a thousand years, and makes no provision for any resurrection and judgment at all of the myriads who people the earth during the millennium, is unscriptural. If this is to be run down as mere inferential reasoning, I am afraid that very few arguments, even in Mr. Bonar's own books, would escape condemnation, and that the strongest arguments in the Socinian and Popish controversies would have to be set down on the same ground. I have purposely avoided all such remarks on the writings of my brethren on the other side, and could have wished that Mr. Bonar had done the same.

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* Passages have even been quoted and reiterated from *Waterland*, by which I am represented as imitating the Socinians, who elude the Scripture evidence for the Trinity by taking refuge in the *natural impossibility* of the doctrine.—(Mr. H. Bonar, p. 70, from Mr. Wood's Affirm. Answ.)

It has been said, too, strangely enough, that I have nothing but *negative* opinions to maintain. "I miss," says Mr. Bonar, "the building up of his own system, for which there is *no space* allowed, and in behalf of which *no direct and positive proof* *texts* are urged.' Here also I have just to say—It is wholly incorrect. "My system" is, that Christ "will come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe," when that prayer of His shall be answered, "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." Mr. Bonar's system is, that he will come to be glorified in but a portion of his saints, and admired only in so many of them that believe as have lived before the millennium—the rest to be brought in by degrees after Christ comes, and to remain in the flesh as subjects of the former class. Again, it is my object to prove that the kingdom of *grace* will continue till there shall not be one soul more to gather in, embracing within its ample bosom the state of the Church, millennium and all, "till the heavens be no more." In a word, it is the object of this book to show that "the heavens and the earth that are now" shall continue so long as sin and death remain, that is, not only to the end of the millennium, but of the "little season" of degeneracy and rebellion that is to succeed it; and *after that*, I "look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness"—unmixed with "any thing that defileth;" while Mr. Bonar believes there will be sin and death for a thousand years after the new heavens and the new earth shall have been created. The positive and the negative of these, and all such propositions, may easily be made to change sides, according to the form in which they are put; but nothing is gained by such verbal processes, and Mr. Bonar should not insist that I shall shape my conclusions according to no formula but his own. "Bring out," says he, "all the passages of Scripture in which the millennium is placed first." But what if I show that the naming of this period in no book of Scripture but the Apocalypse, and its being only implied in other parts of the New Testament, *is just what we should expect*, if my view of it be correct? In that case the method suggested to me will not strike one as the happiest. In fact, perceiving the drift of these criticisms, I have puposely altered my phraseology, so as to keep more clearly and constantly before the reader the only thing in this controversy for which I was induced to take it up, and which it has been my one object to show—that the theory of a kingdom of mortal and sinful men in the new heavens and new earth, under the government of Christ, after he shall have come in his glory, and of a company of glorified saints along with him, is, in every light in which it can be viewed, unscriptural and pernicious. *Every thing about the millennium is incidental to this*, so far as the present volume is concerned.

Since the publication of my former edition, there has been some able writing on the same side. I would particularise a long article entitled, "Modern Millennarianism," in the *British Quarterly Review* for February, 1849. "The Spiritual Reign, by Clemens" (second edition, 1849), is one of the few lay productions on this question that will repay perusal.

May the Lord keep the eye of his Church on "That Day" when He shall be "revealed from heaven in flaming fire," to the terror of his enemies and the joy of his waiting people; when "from His Face the earth and the heavens shall flee away, and no place shall be found for them;" but instead of them shall be "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," and "the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." If this be our habitual attitude, it will matter comparatively little "whether He shall come in the *second* watch," as one class think, "or come in the *third* or *fourth* watch," as others think; for in either case, "when he cometh, we shall open to him immediately!"

GLASGOW, *October* 1, 1849.

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CHRIST'S SECOND COMING, &c.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

The question to be discussed in this volume seems periodically to agitate the Church. In times of general excitement, of extensive change, of pervading uneasiness and trial, this question invariably rises to the surface. On what principle this is to be accounted for, and how it bears on the merits of the controversy, it would be premature, in these opening paragraphs, to hazard an opinion. The fact, however, is as unquestionable as it is worthy of notice. The struggles of the primitive Church forced it up, and kept it alive; with the battles of the Reformation it revived; in the exciting times of the English commonwealth it took a pretty prominent place among the multitudinous questions which distracted the Church; in a word, the first French Revolution—startling Europe, intellectually as well as politically, from the sepulchral repose of the last century, shaking the old continent to its centre, and impregnating the entire social system with new elements both of good and of evil—woke it up, and set inquiring minds to work upon it, to an extent unknown before. While some, carried away by the unparalleled success of modern missions, hastily anticipated the peaceful subjugation of the world to Christ, others were hurried into the opposite extreme, of pronouncing all missionary exertions next to hopeless, without the personal appearing, and the immediate agency of Christ. Since then, the changes in public affairs, both political and ecclesiastical, have been too organic and exciting to allow of this question going to rest; and if the prophet's inquiry, "*O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?*" has been acquiring increased interest from year to year, as each new feature in the times more startling than another has developed itself, we may safely predict that the convulsions of the past year, with all their appalling and wide-spread effects—of which we have yet probably seen but few—will only deepen the excitement which keeps alive this question: "men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

At such a time emphatically, "we do well to take heed to the sure word of prophecy, as to a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts." But all the more does it behove us to see that the light that is in us be not darkness. Great mistakes have undeniably been committed by the students of prophecy from age to age; mistakes which time—that infallible expounder of the Divine counsels—has in every case ultimately detected, but not till, in many instances, they had wrought confusion and every evil work. Certainly, the Thessalonians, "shaken and troubled in mind" by parties who persuaded them that "the day of Christ was at hand, even at the doors," were mistaken; nor was the mistake dealt with, in the exercise of apostolic fidelity, as a perfectly harmless one. It is notorious, too, that a large number of the primitive Christians, for three centuries, fell into the same mistake, expecting the struggles in which they were engaged to issue in the personal appearing of their Lord, and "the first resurrection" of his martyred witnesses. The militant did, indeed, become a triumphant Church, but in a very different sense from what was expected. The martyred testimony of Jesus "lived and reigned," but the martyrs themselves lived not. The Gospel slew the great red dragon—Paganism was defeated in the high places of the field—Christianity ascended the throne of the Cæsars: *that* was the reality contemplated in the Word, but which the enthusiasm of so many had led them to misinterpret. The same mistake, nevertheless, has been again and again committed—never with imperfect punity, and sometimes with consequences truly deplorable.

One day, however, the Redeemer will assuredly come in person. Is that day, then, now "at hand, even at the doors?" or, "shall that day *not* come until" certain events, yet far in the future, have prepared the way for it? A momentous question truly; yet not precisely the question which I am to discuss. What I have to investigate is not *when*, but *for what purposes*, the Redeemer will come.

Some appear to think that all the difference of opinion on the second advent is about its *nearness* or *distance.* The sooner they undeceive themselves on this the better. For my own part, if that were all, I should let the subject alone. To me, the coming of the Lord should be as dear as to any whose views about his coming I am to examine. To "love his appearing" is not the monopoly of a section of his friends. To enter the lists, therefore, with those who think he is at the doors, with the mere view of showing that he is *not*, though it may at times become a necessary duty, to prevent disappointment,* is not the most agreeable of tasks.

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* Sed et illi quibus dicebat apostolus, *Non cito moveamini mente, quasi instet dies Domini*, diligebant utique adventum Domini: nec eos hoc di-

A very different task, however, is mine. Certain events, yet future, are expected on all hands to take place upon earth—for example, the subjugation of the whole world to Christ. If, then, he is to come *before* this, he may even now be at the doors; whereas, if he is not to come till *after* this, it cannot, of course, be quite so near. So far, therefore, the question of time is involved; but quite indirectly and subordinately. What we have mainly to do with is the *events*. According as these are expected before or after the coming of Christ, will be the character and complexion they assume in our eyes. If *after* his coming, he will be expected to *re-constitute the mortal state*, and establish a terrestrial kingdom, *illuminated by the beams of his glory, and pervaded by the sense of his visible presence.* Is this, then, what we are taught to look for? The system, in short, which I am to bring to the test of Scripture is briefly this:

THAT THE FLESHLY AND SUBLUNARY STATE IS NOT TO TERMINATE WITH THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST, BUT TO BE THEN SET UP IN A NEW FORM; WHEN, WITH HIS GLORIFIED SAINTS, THE REDEEMER WILL REIGN IN PERSON ON THE THRONE OF DAVID AT JERUSALEM FOR A THOUSAND YEARS, OVER A WORLD OF MEN YET IN THE FLESH, EATING AND DRINKING, PLANTING AND BUILDING, MARRYING AND GIVING IN MARRIAGE, UNDER THIS MYSTERIOUS SWAY.

This is *Pre-millennialism*, or—as the early fathers, and after them the Reformers and our elder divines, termed

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cens doctor gentium ab illâ dilectione frangebat, qua ut inflammarentur volebat; et ideo nolebat ut crederent eis, a quibus audiebant instare diem Domini, ne forte cum transisset tempus quo eum crediderant esse venturum, et venisse non cernerent, etiam cetera fallaciter sibi promitti arbitrantes, et de mercede fidei desperarent. Non ergo ille diligit adventum Domini qui eum asserit propinquare, aut ille qui asserit non propinquare; sed ille potius, qui eum sive prope sive longe sit, sinceritate fidei, firmitate spei, ardore caritatis exspectat.—AUGUST. *Epist.* cxcix. 15.

it—*Chiliasm;* that is, the expectation of a *thousand years* reign upon earth *after* the second coming of Christ.* In the above statement I have expressed only the fundamental principle of the system, to which nearly all the expectants of the pre-millennial advent would subscribe, keeping clear of the points on which they are divided. I have said, for example, that they expect *the saints*, in glorified bodies, to be associated with Christ in his millennial reign; but *what saints* is not agreed. The early chiliasts—so far as I have been able to gather their views—thought that those whom Christ will find *alive* at his coming would be left below during the thousand years, and only such as had *died* before his coming would appear with him in glory. A few in modern times are of the same opinion, postponing the change of the living saints till the end of the millennium. But the great majority of modern pre-millennialists hold that the saints of both classes—the dead by resurrection, and the living by instantaneous transformation—will appear with Christ in glory at the beginning of the millennium.† Again, I have said they look for a reign over *a world of men in flesh and blood;* but *what men* is not agreed. The moderns, for the most part, expect the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, and their supremacy over the nations of the earth;‡ while the early chiliasts appear to have held, with their opponents, that Christianity had for ever abolished Jewish peculiarities; and though, in spite of this, they were termed *Judaisers*, this was not, so far as I can observe, because they contended for any millennial supremacy of Jews over Gentiles, but because their system *Judaised Christianity itself.* In a word, I have said they expect a reign *upon earth* of Christ and his glorified saints; but whether actually *upon* the earth, or only *over* and hovering *above* it, in the air, and whether *visibly* or *invisibly*—whether the ruled will *see* their rulers, and, if so, *to what extent*, whether *fully* or but *partially*, whether *always* or only *at times*—is by no means agreed.

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* Hi autem qui spiritales sunt, istos ita credentes χιλιαστας appellant Græco vocabulo; quos, verbum e verbo exprimentes, nos possumus Milliarios nuncupare.—AUGUST. *De Civit. Dei*, lib. xx. cap. vii. 1. Χιλιασται, quos nos dicere possumus Milliarios.—HIERON. *in Esa.* lxv. 22, 23.

† Mr. Burgh limits the saints of the first resurrection to *sufferers* for Christ, in contradistinction from believers at large.—*Lectures on the Second Advent*, and *Exposition of the Book of Revelation.*

‡ Certain American writers have lately revived the old opinion, that the millennial earth will be wholly in possession of the glorified saints

These and other points of difference I have purposely avoided in my statement of their doctrine. Even in the sequel, they will be noticed only in so far as they affect the *common element*—the essence of the system; I mean, the expectation of a mortal and sublunary state *after* the second advent—*of a* GLORIFIED *and* FLESHLY *state of humanity, as constituting the* UPPER *and* LOWER *departments of one and the same millennial kingdom.*

This is the doctrine which, by the light of God's Word, I have undertaken to examine. Some may think it of small consequence whether this system be true or false; but no one who intelligently surveys its nature and bearings can be of that opinion. Pre-millennialism is no barren speculation—useless though true, and innocuous though false. It is a school of Scripture interpretation; it impinges upon and affects some of the most commanding points of the Christian faith; and, when suffered to work its unimpeded way, it stops not till it has pervaded with its own genius the entire system of one's theology, and the whole tone of his spiritual character, constructing, I had almost said, a

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Mr. Burchell, in his *Midnight Cry*, which did not appear till this sheet was in type, takes the same view.

world of its own; so that, holding the same faith, and cherishing the same fundamental hopes as other Christians, he yet sees things through a medium of his own, and finds every thing instinct with the life which this doctrine has generated within him.

Let us not, however, prejudge the question. There is danger of this on both sides. On the one hand, there are certain minds which, either from constitutional temperament, or the particular school of theology to which they are attached, have tendencies in the direction of pre-millennialism so strong, that they are ready to embrace it almost immediately *con amore.* Souls that burn with love to Christ—who with the mother of Sisera, cry through the lattice, "Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?" and with the spouse, "Make haste, my Beloved, and be thou like to a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of spices"—such souls are ready to catch at a doctrine which seems to promise a much earlier appearing of their beloved Lord than the ordinary view. "I have heard," relates an honest and warm-hearted pre-millennialist of the Commonwealth time, "I have heard of a poor man who, it seems, loved and longed for Christ's appearance, that when there was a great earthquake, and when many cried out the day of judgment was come, and one cried, 'Alas! alas! what shall I do?' and a third, 'How shall I hide myself?' &c., that poor man only said, 'Ah! is it so? Is the day come? Where shall I go? Upon what mountain shall I stand to see my Saviour?'"* How deeply we sympathize with this feeling will by-and-by appear. It is for such as feel thus, more than for any others, that I have undertaken this investigation.—There are next, your curious and restless spirits who feed upon the future. These are charmed with the multifarious details of the millennial kingdom. They are in their very element when settling the order in which the events shall occur, separating the felicities of the kingdom into its terrestrial and celestial departments respectively, sorting the multitudinous particulars relating to the Ezekiel and Apocalyptic cities—and such like studies. For such minds, whose appetite for the marvellous is the predominant feature of their mental character, and who live in a sort of unreal world—for these, the confused and shadowy grandeur of a kingdom of glory upon earth, with all that relates to its introduction, its establishment, its administration, and its connexion with the final and unchanging state, opens up a subject of surpassing interest and riveting delight—the very food which their peculiar temperament craves and feeds on. And, to mention no more, there are those who seem to have a constitutional tendency to materialize the objects of faith, and can hardly conceive of them save as more or less implicated with this terrestrial platform. Such minds, it is superfluous to observe, will have a natural affinity with a system which brings the glory of the resurrection-state into immediate and active communion with sublunary affairs, and represents the reign of those who neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven, as consisting in a mysterious rule over men in the flesh, who eat and drink, buy and sell, plant and build, marry wives, and are given in marriage. To set about proving to persons of this cast of mind that pre-millennialism will not stand the test of Scripture, is like attempting to rob them of a jewel, or to pluck the sun out of the heavens. To such minds, any other view of the subject is perfectly bald and repulsive, while theirs is encircled with a glory that excelleth. To them it carries the force of intuitive perception; they *feel*—they *know* it to be true.

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* *Christ's Appearance the Second Time for the Salvation of Believers.* [By John Durant] 1653. Hatchard's Reprint, p. 119. Lond. 1829.

But are there no *anti*-premillennial tendencies, which require to be guarded against? I think there are. Under the influence of such tendencies, the inspired text, as such, presents no rich and exhaustless field of prayerful and delighted investigation; exegetical inquiries and discoveries are an uncongenial element; and whatever Scripture intimations regarding the future destinies of the Church and of the world involve events out of the usual range of human occurrences, or exceeding the anticipations of enlightened Christian sagacity, are almost instinctively overlooked or softened down. Such minds turn away from pre-millennialism just as instinctively as the others are attracted to it. The bare statement of its principles carries to their mind its own refutation—not so much from its perceived unscripturalness as from the absurdity which it seems to carry on the face of it. They have hardly patience to listen to it. It requires an effort to sit without a smile under a grave exposition and defence of it. If they undertake to refute it, it is a task the irksomeness of which they are unable to conceal, and their unfitness for which can scarcely fail to appear. Let us try to avoid both extremes, investigating reverently the mind of the Spirit.

Much irrelevant discussion has been mixed up with the question of the pre-millennial advent, and arguments have been advanced on both sides which originate in confused apprehensions of the whole subject.

Some pre-millennialists, for example, seem to think that the belief in a *personal* advent is confined to themselves, and that those who repudiate a pre-millennial advent are not expecting their adorable Lord in person at all. Surely so gross a misrepresentation does not require to be protested against. It is the *time*, and consequently the *objects*, of the Redeemer's coming that are in question—not its reality.

Another misconception relates to the final destiny of the present physical system—"the heavens and earth which are now." That these are not to be annihilated, but to furnish the elements out of which "the new heavens and the new earth" are to emerge, after the general conflagration, is zealously maintained by most modern pre-millennialists, as part of their system, and as what their opponents may be expected to repudiate. But this is quite a mistake. In point of fact, the primitive and the earlier English advocates of that doctrine seem to have taken other views of the final abode of the redeemed; while, in our own day, neither do all of them affirm it, nor is it denied by all their opponents. Mr. Tyso, for example, insists that after the thousand years' reign of Christ upon earth, he and his people will take their leave of it for ever; while Dr. Urwick of Dublin, writing *against* the pre-millennial doctrine, maintains, at some length, that the eternal abode of the glorified Church is to rise out of the ashes of this present earth. So does Mr. Fairbairn, in his able work on the *Typology of Scripture*, and several others.* Some minds shrink from this latter opinion, as tending to carnalize, or at least to lower, our views of the celestial state. But may not such sensitiveness spring from an unconscious confounding of the present wretched state with that which is expected to take its place? May there not be in it some tincture of that morbid spiritualism, which shrinks from the very touch of materialism, as if separation from it in every form would be the consummation of happiness? May not the Gnostic element—of the essential sinfulness and vanity of matter—be found lurking beneath it? Certainly, if the earth was implicated in the curse, it is natural to expect that it should share in its removal. Certainly, the glorified bodies both of the Redeemer and the redeemed derive their elements from the dust of this ground, which will thus—in their persons at least—for ever endure. And if it be no degradation to the Son of God to take it into his own person, "as the First-born from the dead"—if the dust of this ground is capable of becoming a "spiritual" and a "glorious body," meet vehicle for the perfected and beatified spirit, the sharer of its bliss in the immediate presence, and the instrument of all its activities in the service, of God and the Lamb—it does seem hard to conceive how the very system which has furnished all these elements of incorruption, and spirituality, and beauty, and glory—when its present constitution shall be dissolved, and when new and higher laws shall be stamped upon it—should be incapable of furnishing a congenial abode for the glorified Church. Nor is it easy to make any thing else out of Paul's singularly interesting and noble announcements regarding the deliverance of a groaning creation from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. viii. 19–23), or fairly to interpret the celebrated prediction of Peter (2 Pet. iii. 10–13), otherwise than as intimating that "the new heavens and the new earth," physically considered, will be the same which God originally created for the abode of men—when it shall have undergone an igneous, as it has already undergone an aqueous, transformation. Nor let any one ask, Of what consequence is it whether the one opinion or the other be the correct one? For if this be what the Spirit has seen fit so specifically to reveal, it must be worthy of being held fast by us; and whatever view we take of it will necessarily give its hue to all other statements of Scripture regarding the earth.

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* The literature of this question, in the Augustan age of theology may be seen in *De Moor* (Comm. in Marck. Comp.) xxxiv. § 30.

But be all this as it may, the reader will now see that it does not divide the advocates from the opponents of the pre-millennial advent. The ultimate destiny of our present physical system, is a question on which neither party are unanimous amongst themselves, and which may safely be regarded as an *open question.*

CHAPTER II.

CHRIST'S SECOND APPEARING THE CHURCH'S BLESSED HOPE.

PRE-MILLENNIALISTS have done the Church a real service, by calling attention to the place which the second advent holds in the Word of God and the scheme of divine truth. If the controversy which they have raised should issue in a fresh and impartial inquiry into this branch of it, I, for one, instead of regretting, shall rejoice in the agitation of it. When they dilate upon the prominence given to this doctrine in Scripture, and the practical uses which are made of it, they touch a chord in the heart of every simple lover of his Lord, and carry conviction to all who tremble at his word; so much so, that I am persuaded nine-tenths of all who have embraced the pre-millennial view of the second advent, have done so on the supposition that no other view of it will admit of an unfettered and unmodified use of the Scripture language on the subject—that it has its proper interpretation and full force only on this theory. Assertions to this effect abound in the writings of all modern pre-millennialists. But the *fact* of the scriptural prominence of this doctrine, and their *inference* from this as to the *time* and the *objects* of it, must not be confounded. On the former, we are cordially at one with them; on the latter, we are directly at issue with them. And believing, as we do, that the clearing of these preliminary points will go far with many to settle the whole question, we think that a chapter on each of them will not be mis-spent.

With them we affirm, that the REDEEMER'S SECOND APPEARING IS THE VERY POLE-STAR OF THE CHURCH. That it is so held forth in the New Testament, is beyond dispute. Let any one do himself the justice to collect and arrange the evidence on the subject, and he will be surprised—if the study be new to him—at once at the copiousness, the variety, and the conclusiveness of it. It is but a specimen of that evidence that we can give here.

Is it careless SINNERS, then, or lax professors, that are to be warned?

"What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? *For the Son of man shall come* in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." (Matt. xvi. 26, 27.)

"The Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish. *But the day of the Lord will come* as a thief in the night." (2 Pet. iii. 9, 10.)

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for *the day* shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire." (1 Cor. iii. 13.)

"*Behold, the Lord cometh* with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 14, 15.)

"*Behold, he cometh* with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." (Rev. i. 7.)

Is it SAINTS that are to be stimulated to a fearless testimony for Christ, to patient suffering for his sake, to hope, to constancy, to heavenly-mindedness—to universal duty?

"Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Luke xii. 8.)

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, *when his glory shall be revealed*, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Pet. iv. 12, 13.)

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." (James v. 7.)

"Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you *at the revelation of Jesus Christ*." (1 Pet. i. 13.)

"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that *wait for their lord*, when he will return from the wedding; that, *when he cometh* and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord *when he cometh* shall find watching." (Luke xii. 35–37.)

"And now, little children, abide in him; that *when He shall appear*, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." (1 John ii. 28.)

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify *therefore* your members which are upon the earth." (Col. iii. 4, 5.)

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that *when He shall appear*, we shall be like him;

> for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in Him (επ' αυτῳ, in the coming Redeemer) purifieth himself, even as He is pure." (1 John iii. 2, 3.)

> "The crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also *that love his appearing*." (2 Tim. iv. 8.)

> "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also *we look for the Saviour*, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phil. iii. 20.)

> "That which ye have (already) hold fast till I come." (Rev. ii. 25.)

When the Thessalonian converts turned to God from idols, it was on the one hand "to serve the living and true God;" and on the other, "to *wait for his Son from heaven*." (1 Thess. i. 9, 10.)

This "waiting for Christ" was the distinguishing excellence of the Corinthians: "Ye come behind in no gift; *waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:* who shall also confirm you unto the end, *that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ*." (1 Cor. i. 7, 8.)

This last passage suggests a class of texts, in which the second advent is placed in a light peculiarly interesting. As the Church never dies, and all that are in Christ between the two advents are viewed as one continuous living body, so in the case of them all—whether dying before or found alive at his coming—*grace* is represented as terminating in glory, without an allusion to aught as coming between.* Thus:—

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* Homines omnium ætatum conjunctim unum quiddam repræsentant: fidelesque jam olim expectantes, habentesque se loco illorum, qui victuri sunt in adventu Domini, pro eorum personâ locuti sunt. . . Unaquæque generatio, quæ hoc vel illo tempore vivit, occupat illo vitæ suæ

"*Occupy till I come.*" (Luke xix. 13.)

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless *unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (1 Thess. v. 23.)

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it *until the day of Jesus Christ.*" (Phil. i. 6.)

"And this I pray, that ye may be without offence, *till the day of Christ.*" (Phil. i. 9, 10.)

"God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." (1 Thess. v. 9, 10.)

"As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death *till he come.*" 1 Cor. xi. 26.)

Delightful thought! that the close of the believer's career is to be regarded as merging in the solemnities of the second advent—that the beams of his Lord's glory should be seen brightening the horizon of his present abode. The last companies of the disciples shall be sitting, perchance, at his table—their hearts burning within them, as the bleeding love of his *first* advent rises before their view, and longing for the daybreak of his *second* appearing. They scarce venture to hope that the time for the flight of the shadows has come. Yet remembering those endeared words, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come," the question steals across them. What if it should be even now? Scarcely has the thought taken possession of them, when, lo! a strange sensation is felt by them all. The spirit of

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tempore locum eorum, qui tempore adventus Domini victuri sunt.—BENGEL., *ad* 1 Thess. iv. 15.

each glows and brightens as never it had done before. Each looks to his fellow, as if to ask, What is this? It is "THE DAY-STAR ARISING IN THEIR HEARTS!" (2 Pet. i. 19.) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, their Lord is with them! It is Himself. He has come at last, in the glory of his second appearing, and themselves and the poor earthly tables at which they sit, are transfigured into shining guests and a table never to be drawn!

There is still another class of texts—the most delightful, perhaps, of all, and certainly the most telling upon the heart—in which the *widowed* condition and feeling of the Church, while her Lord is absent from her in the heavens, are brought to view. And from whom do we get this idea in its perfection? Is it from the Apostles expressing the feeling which His absence created in the hearts of his loving people? No; it is from Christ himself, intimating what he expected at their hands—*taking it for granted* that they would not be able to do without him. "And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and the disciples of the Pharisees, and thy disciples fast not? And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when *the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.* No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old," &c. (Luke v. 33–39.) Would it be incongruous in the Church to mourn and feel desolate in the *presence* of her Lord? Not less incongruous, it seems, is it *not* to cherish the feeling of desolation in his *absence.* And both are such incongruities as confounding the seasons of fasting and feasting, as putting a piece of a new garment upon an old, as putting new wine into old bottles, and preferring new wine to old. Still more touchingly does this thought find vent in his last discourse with his disciples, as he sat with them at the communion table in the upper room of Jerusalem, the night before he suffered. As he broke to them, by little and little, the sad news that he was about to leave them, he poured forth the richest consolations in the views of it—"staying them with flagons, and comforting them with apples." But he had no wish to carry this too far; and Jesus will think it an abuse of his consolations, if we have learned from them to do without him. Written communications and tokens of affection from the absent One are dear to affection—but only when himself cannot be had. Christ's word, and the seals of his love conveyed to our hearts by the blessed Spirit, are inexpressibly dear to his loving people—but only in the absence of himself. And never do we please Christ so much as when we "refuse to be comforted," even with his own consolations, save in the prospect of *his Personal Return.* "Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me, and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in travail, hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And *ye now therefore, have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.*" (John xvi. 19–22.)*

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* Felix, inquam, illa anima quæ quotidie gemit et luget, quia auctorem omnium mundi Salvatorem Christum non videt. Ipsa profecto ridebit in die novissimo, et gaudens gaudebit in æternum cum Christo. Illa vero quæ non gemit de Christi abscessu, videat ne irrefragabiliter ploret in ejusdem Christi adventu. Illa sponsum sponsa suum non amat, quæ pro desiderio illum videndi aliquo tempore non suspirat. . . . Scio et certus sum, quod absterget Deus omnem lachrymam ab oculis

But some will say, What though we admit all this? The second coming of Christ is still an event which will not take place till the end of the world. Holding it, therefore, as an undoubted truth, we must, in the mean time, look to events nearer home. The *death* of any individual is, to all practical purposes, the coming of Christ to that individual. It is his summons to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. It is to him the close of time, and the opening of an unchanging eternity, as truly as the second advent will be to mankind at large. On this I submit the following remarks:—

First, It is at once conceded that there is a perfect *analogy* between the two classes of events—Christ's second coming, with its concurrent circumstances and final issues, on the one hand; and the death of individuals, and all its consequences to those individuals, on the other. Nor can the application to the latter, in their proper place and subordinate sense, of the warnings suggested by the former, be reasonably objected to. It is, in fact, hardly possible to resist it. It comes spontaneously.* Still, however, it is in the way of analogy alone that texts expressive of the one can or ought to be applied to the other. It can never be warrantable, and is often danger-

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ejus, cum venerit dies nuptiarum Christi et ecclesiæ, tempore illo quo fuerint virgines introductæ in thalamum regis æterni. Sed quomodo ab oculis tuis absterget lachrymas, si pro ejus amore non gemis et ploras?—BERNARD. *in Cœna Domini*, *Serm.* ix.

* Quod (that the day of the Lord will come as a thief) unusquisque debet etiam de die hujus vitæ suæ novissimo formidare. In quo enim quemque invenit suus novissimus dies, in hoc eum comprehendet mundi novissimus dies: quoniam qualis in die isto quisque moritur talis in die illo judicabitur. . . . . Imparatum autem inveniet illa dies, quem inparatum inveniet suæ vitæ hujus ultimus dies.—AUGUST. *Ep.* cxix. 2, 3.

Par est ratio judiciorum incertæque obitus horæ, quavis ætate, ac diei novissimi.—BENGEL *ad* Matt. xxiv. 42.

ous, to make that the primary and proper *interpretation* of a passage which is but a secondary, though it may be a very legitimate and even irresistible *application* of it.

Second, It is not enough that we believe the doctrines of Scripture numerically, so to speak. We must believe them as they are revealed—in their revealed collocations and bearings. Implicit submission to the authority of God's Word obviously includes this. If, then, Christ's second appearing, instead of being full in the view of the Church, as we find it in the New Testament, is shifted into the background, while other anticipations are advanced into its room, which, though themselves scriptural, do not occupy in Scripture the place which we assign to them, are we "trembling" at the authority and the wisdom of God in his Word, or are we not rather "leaning to our own understanding?" "Let not your heart be troubled, (said Jesus to his sorrowing disciples): In my Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go away"—What then? 'Ye shall soon follow me? Death shall shortly bring us together?' Nay; but "If I go away, *I will come again and receive you unto myself;* that where I am, there ye may be also." (John xiv. 1-3.) "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven, this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall"—What? Take you home soon to himself, at death? Nay, but shall "so *come* in like manner as ye have seen him *go* into heaven." (Acts i. 10, 11.) And how know we that, by jostling this event out of its scriptural place in the expectations of the Church, we are not, in a great degree, destroying its character and power as a practical principle? Can we not believe, though unable to trace it, that God's methods are ever best; and that as in nature, so perhaps in revelation, a modification by us of the divine arrangements, apparently slight, and attended even with some seeming advantages, may be followed by a total and unexpected change of results, the opposite of what is anticipated and desired ? So we fear it to be here. But this leads to our last remark on this point.

Third, The coming of Christ to individuals at death—however warrantably we may speak so, and whatever profitable considerations it may suggest—is not *fitted* for taking that place in the view of the believer which Scripture assigns to the second advent. This is a proposition of equal interest and importance. It would bear to be established and illustrated in detail. A hint or two, however, may suffice.

1. The death of believers, however changed in its character, in virtue of their union to Christ, is, intrinsically considered, not joyous, but grievous—not attractive, but repulsive. It is the disruption of a tie which the Creator formed for perpetuity—the unnatural and abhorrent divorce of parties made for sweet and uninterrupted fellowship. True, there is no curse in it to the believer ; but it is the memorial of the curse, telling of sin, and breach of the first covenant, and legal wrath. All the ideas, therefore, which death, as such, is fitted to suggest, even in connexion with the better covenant, are of a humiliating kind. Whatever is associated with it of a joyous nature *is derived from other considerations*, by which its intrinsic gloominess is, in the case of believers, relieved. But the Redeemer's second appearing is, to the believer, an event of unmingled joyousness, whether as respects the honour of his Lord, which will then be majestically vindicated before the world which had set it at nought, or as respects his own salvation, which will then have its glorious completion. How, then, should the former event be fitted to awaken feelings, I say not equally intense, but even of the

same order, as the latter? *In connexion with* his second appearing, the believer is privileged to regard his own death as bound up with the Redeemer's triumph, and a step to his final victory with Him. But as a substitute for it—as being *to all practical purposes* (as they say) one and the same thing with the expectation of the Redeemer's appearing, this looking forward to one's own death will be found very deficient in practical effect.

2. The bliss of the disembodied spirits of the just is not only *incomplete*, but, in some sense, *private* and *fragmentary*, if I may so express myself. Each believer enters on it for himself at his own death. His spirit is with Christ, resting consciously under his wing from the warfare of the flesh, and tranquilly anticipating future glory: "He shall enter into peace; they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness." (Isa. lvii. 2.)

But at the Redeemer's appearing, all his redeemed will be collected together, and PERFECTLY, PUBLICLY, and SIMULTANEOUSLY glorified. Is it necessary to point out the inferiority, in practical power, of the one prospect to the other, or to indicate the superior *class* of ideas and feelings which the latter is fitted to generate?

3. To put the expectation of one's own death in place of the prospect of Christ's appearing, is to dislocate a beautiful jointing in divine truth—to destroy one of its finest collocations. Here it is, as expressed by the apostle: "The grace of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Tit. ii. 11–14.) Here

both comings of Christ are brought together; the first in "grace"—the second in "glory;" the first "bringing salvation"—the second, to complete the salvation brought. To the first we look *back* by *faith*—to the second we look *forward* by *hope*. In the enjoyment of the fruit of the first, we anticipate the fulness of the second. Between these two the apostle here beautifully places the Christian's present holy walk. These are the two *pivots* on which turns the Christian life—the two *wings* on which believers mount up as eagles. If either is clipped, the soul's flight heavenward is low, feeble, and fitful. This is no casual collocation of truths. It is a studied, and, with the apostle, a favourite juxtaposition of the two greatest events in the Christian redemption, the *first* and the *last*, bearing an intrinsic relation in their respective objects. "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 27, 28.)* "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. viii. 17.) And who does not see that the comfort and the profit of this collocation in our own minds is as great as is the beauty of it in the text of Scripture? All is thus made to centre in the PERSON OF CHRIST—the contemplations and the affections of the believer travelling between his Abasement and his Exaltation, and finding in Jesus, under both aspects together, a completed salvation.*

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* The point of this beautiful passage is missed, I suspect, by most readers, as it certainly is by many commentators. It is not the *saint's* solemn anticipation of "death" and "judgment," as events common to him with all mankind. It is the *sinner's* "fearful looking for of judgment"—which the work of Christ is designed to dispel. In the one verse, "death" and "judgment" are held up as the two great stages of the *curse of the law*. In the other verse, we have the corresponding stages of *redemption from the curse*, which Christ accomplishes by his two advents; at his *first*, "bearing the sins of many," and when he comes the *second* time, "appearing without sin unto salvation." "As man (says Dr. Owen on this passage) was to die once legally and penally for sin, by the sentence of the law, and no more; so Christ died, suffered, and offered once, and no more, to bear sin, to expiate it, and therefore to *take away death*, so far as it was penal. And as after death, men must appear again the second time to *judgment*, to undergo *condemnation* thereon; so after his once offering to take away sin and death, Christ shall appear the second time, to *free us from judgment*, and to bestow on us eternal *salvation*."

BENGEL, with characteristic terseness and felicity, gives the same view in two lines: Οὕτω, *sic*, *i. e.*, Christus liberavit nos a morte et judicio; tametsi ut *mors*, sic *judicium*, nominetenus remanet.

* The reader will find a similar view of the coming of Christ in Dr. Urwick's interesting work on the *Second Advent*, though on this important head the illustration might with advantage have been fuller, in a series of popular discourses.

CHAPTER III.

THE HOPE OF THE ADVENT IN RELATION TO THE QUESTION OF TIME.

We have seen that Christ's second coming is the Church's "blessed hope." Its place in the Christian system, and in the Church's view, is over against his first coming, as its proper counterpart. As "ONCE in the end of the world he hath appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself," so, "to them that look for him, shall he appear THE SECOND TIME, without sin unto salvation." As the grace of the one coming is received by faith, so the glory of the other is apprehended by hope; and thus, between the Cross and the Crown, the believer finds all his salvation and all his desire. With reference to the former, his attitude is that of broken-hearted sweet recumbency; with reference to the latter, that of glad yet humble expectancy. On the one hand, he determines to "know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified;" on the other, he is found in the ranks of "all them that love his appearing."

Very good, says the pre-millennialist; but the question is, With which theory of the second advent does all this accord? When a man believes that Christ's second coming may take place at any time—that he may come just now, for aught that we know, quite as readily as a hundred or a thousand years hence—one can understand how he should set himself to "look" and "wait" and "watch" for him, "not knowing when the Master of the house may come, at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning." But will the Church be brought up to this expectant attitude by telling her that a whole millennium, not yet begun, must run its course ere Christ appear? And does not this blunt the edge of such texts as the following: —"The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" —"The Judge standeth at the door"—"Behold, I come quickly?"

"Our ignorance," says Mr. Bickersteth, "of the day and hour when Christ comes seems inconsistent with any certain intervening period of a thousand years."* To the same purpose, Mr. Dalton,† the Duke of Manchester,‡ and most other writers on the same side. Mr. H. Bonar admits the possibility of *longing*, of *waiting*, and even of *looking* for Christ's coming, on the common view of it, but strenuously denies the possibility of *watching* for it on that view.§

That this is plausible, I freely admit. In fact, if there be plausibility in the system at all, it lies here. I have felt it necessary, therefore, to weigh it again and again; but at every fresh examination I have found it more specious than solid. That it is entirely fallacious, may be shown by a variety of considerations.

One remark, however, I must request the reader to bear in mind throughout the whole of this discussion. I attach no importance, in this argument, to the precise period of *a thousand years*. It occurs nowhere in Scripture but in one solitary passage. There are reasons for taking it definitely and literally; but, to some these reasons appear slender. They think it means just a long indefinite period; agreeing with us, however, as to its being yet to come. Be it so Wherever I speak of the millennium, or "thousand years," let them understand their own "indefinite period," or bright "latter day," to precede the coming of Christ; and my argument will remain the same. Then, as to its being yet to come, let no one suppose I expect that the *beginning and end of this period will be so clearly discernible as to leave no room for doubt upon any mind.* On the contrary, I think there can hardly be a doubt that it will follow the law of all Scripture dates in this respect —of Daniel's "seventy weeks," and of the "*twelve hundred and sixty days*" of Antichristian rule. The beginning and end of the former of these periods, though a long past one, is even yet a matter of some controversy, while the beginning and end of the latter period is confessedly unsettled. Why, then, should we suppose that it must be otherwise with the millennial period? If the *first* stages of it should be marked only by the rising beams of the Sun of Righteousness over the darkness and disease, the disorder and confusion, the wretchedness and ruin, which they are destined to chase away; and if its *last* stages should be characterized by nothing but the waning brightness and decaying spirituality of its religious character—all being outwardly unchanged, and nothing wanting but the animating spirit—like "the glory of the Lord," which took its gradual departure from the first temple, hovering over the threshold of the house, then going up from the midst of the city and resting for a moment on the mount of Olives, as if to take a last lingering look of its wonted abode, and finally disappearing from the scene, to make way for the judgments of an incensed God:—if, I say, the commencement and the close of the latter day should be thus intentionally shrouded in obscurity, and the same *uncertainty* overhang this as *all* the great periods of the divine economy, would it not be worthy of Him who, in his ways as in Himself, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever?

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* Guide to the Prophecies, p. 66, seventh edition.

† Lent Lectures, by English Clergymen ("Second Coming," &c.), pp. 95, 96, second edition.

‡ Finished Mystery, pp. 277–281.

§ Prophetical Landmarks, p. 88, &c.

With this explanation, I proceed to examine this new theory of "watching" for Christ's coming, as incompatible with the ordinary view of the second advent. And,

1. Can anything be more arbitrary than the distinction attempted to be drawn between *longing*, *waiting*, and *looking* for Christ, on the one hand, and *watching* for him, on the other? Doubtless, these terms express distinct shades of thought and feeling; but the state of the soul in them all is so nearly the same, that it is scarcely conceivable how any doctrine that destroys one of them should admit of the exercise of the other three. Beyond question, all scriptural exercises of heart towards a coming Redeemer must stand or fall together.

2. This alleged impossibility of watching for Christ's coming, on the ordinary view of it, involves a serious charge against the Christianity of the major part of the Christian Church, almost from the age of the apostles downwards. An extract or two from the fathers of the Scottish Church, for which we are indebted to Mr. A. Bonar,* will sufficiently illustrate this remark. "Few in Scotland," Mr. Bonar truly observes, "held the pre-millennial view, but they loved the Lord's appearing."

"Why," says Principal *Rollock*, "should not the hope of Christ's returning comfort our souls, and make them rejoice? How happy is that man who earnestly looks and waits for the blessed and glorious coming again of the Lord to judgment, for that hope shall comfort and uphold him in all his troubles and distresses."

"O when," writes the seraphic *Rutherford*, "will we meet? O how long is it to the dawning of the marriage-day! O sweet Jesus, take wide steps! O my Lord, come over mountains at one stride! O my Blessed, flee as a roe or young hart upon the mountains of separation. O if he would fold the heavens together like an old cloak, and shovel time and days out of the way, and make ready in haste the Lamb's wife for her husband! . . . . . . O heavens, more fast! O time, run, run, and hasten the marriage-day; for love is tormented with delays! . . . . Look to the east: the day-sky is breaking. Think not that Christ loseth time, or lingereth unsuitably. . . . . The Lord's bride will be up or down, above the water, swimming, or under the water, sinking, until her lordly and mighty Redeemer and Husband set his head through these skies, and come with his fair court to rid all these pleas, and give them the longed-for inheritance."

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* Redemption Drawing Nigh, pp. 21, &c.

And shall it be said of these men, that, though "they *loved* their Lord's appearing," they could not possibly "*watch* for it?"

But it may be replied—These worthies, though they were not pre-millennialists, interposed no definite millennium between their own day and the day of Christ's appearing. Whether they did or not, I know not. There is, probably, little means of knowing what their views were of the latter-day period. But there is not a particle of evidence that they had any such views of the *nearness* of Christ's coming as pre-millennialists assert to be indispensable to watching for it. The contrary, indeed, seems evident enough from Rutherford's language in the very extract which we have given. What else can be gathered from his passionate wish that the Lord would "take *wide* steps, come over mountains at one stride, fold the heavens together like an old cloak, and shovel *time* and *days* out of the way," but that he looked upon the actual *period* of Christ's coming as identical with the *end of time* itself?

And yet we find him longing, waiting, looking, and watching too, for his Lord's appearing, as if it had been the very next event which was to happen. And truly, to him, it *was* the next event; for as "love is tormented with delays"—to use his own expressive language—insomuch that "*one day seems as a thousand years*," so hope, which brings near the Beloved Object, makes "*a thousand years as one day*." What, to them that love his appearing, are *falls of Antichrist*, and bright *latter days*, and whole *millenniums* of refreshing, in his absence? "Holy Lord," says *Bernard* somewhere, "dost thou call that 'a little while' in which I shall not see thee? O this little is a long little while!"

Thus the heart alternates between two very different and seemingly opposite views of the interval between its own day and the day of Christ's appearing. Now it seems *long*, and anon it seems *short*. "The bridegroom *tarried*," says the Lord himself, in the parable of the virgins. (Matt. xxv. 5.) "Yet a little while," says his apostle, "and the Coming One will come, and *will not tarry*." (Heb. x. 37.) (χρονιζοντος ου χρονιει.) To faith and hope it seems near, even at the doors; to love and longing desire it seems far, far away: to the one it is but "a day," and then he will be here; to the other it is "a thousand years"—dreary period! In the one case, "we do with patience wait for it;" in the other, "tormented with delays," we cry out, with the Psalmist, "But thou, O Lord, how long?" Wilt thou not shovel Antichrist, ay, and the millennium too—yea, time and days together—out of the way, and "set thy head through these skies," that "so we may be ever with the Lord!"

To the above examples of this double way of viewing the Redeemer's coming, I make no apology for adding that of one but lately removed from the Church below, whose mind seemed to be singularly imbued with the spirit of Christ, while his pen, on devotional subjects, flowed almost as the oracles of God. I allude to *Robert Wodrow.** On the subject of united prayer among Christians, he drew up two Memorials (1841 and 1842), very precious, addressed " To the children of God scattered abroad throughout the world, with earnest desires that grace and mercy may be multiplied to them all through the knowledge of God our Saviour." On the topics for united prayer, having noticed among other things, in the first Memorial, " The conversion of God's ancient people as the most remarkable which is to take place until the coming of Christ, the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh, the destruction of Antichrist, the utter abolition of idolatry, the universal overthrow of Satan's kingdom, the universal diffusion of the gospel and its blessings," he then says—

" *Stretching beyond all these great events* connected with the glory of the latter day, believers should look forward to the kingdom of glory itself, and pray for the coming of that day when Christ shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel, and when he shall be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe, as it will be then, and not till then, that the divine character and government will be vindicated, the Redeemer's enemies subdued, the number of the elect completed, and their bodies as well as souls redeemed and glorified with himself. Hence we are commanded to be *looking for* and

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* Whose *Address to the Children of Israel*, prepared at the request of the Jews' Committee of the Church of Scotland, adopted by the General Assembly of that Church, and translated into nearly all the Continental, and some of the Oriental languages, has probably never been surpassed, in point of scriptural character and unction, by any human composition.

hasting unto the coming of the day of God; hence it is the closing prayer of the Church, 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus;' and hence it should be often the prayer of believers, individually and collectively, 'Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of spices.'"

In the second Memorial he says—

"*Habitually desiring the coming of the Lord*, we shall be naturally led to abound in prayer for the accomplishment of those objects which we have every reason, from the Word of God, to believe, *must be fulfilled before that great final event takes place.* Glorious things are spoken of the state of the Church in the latter day"—and then follows a charming description of its "millennial rest."

Now, let the reader bear in mind for what purpose we have extracted these passages. Not, certainly, to determine by human authority whether Christ's coming is to precede or to follow this latter day, but to meet the bold assertion, that on this last view of the Redeemer's coming *it is not possible to watch for it.* Such assertions seem better met by facts than by arguments. And unless it is to be alleged that the gifted and holy men whose language we have quoted did not understand their own exercises, the assertion, I think, must be given up as untenable.

But the heart of the fallacy has yet to be reached. This novel theory of watching is founded, as I proceed to show, on a very narrow induction of Scripture passages, and stands opposed to the spirit of a large and very important class of divine testimonies.

4. It seems to be taken for granted that the New Testament has but *one future event* to hold up to the Church and to the world, namely, the coming of Christ, and even but *one aspect* of that event, namely, its *nearness* and the corresponding duty of *watching* for it But nothing can be a

greater mistake. We have seen already for what purposes the New Testament holds forth the coming of Christ, both to saints and to sinners. But other purposes had to be served besides these, which have drawn forth *truths of quite another order;* and if the one set of passages, taken by themselves, might seem to imply that Christ might come *to-morrow*, or *any day* (as the phrase is), even in apostolic times, there are whole classes of passages which clearly show that the reverse of this was the mind of the Spirit.

I refer to those Scriptures which announce the *work to be done*, and the extensive *changes* to come over the face of the Church and of Society, *between the two advents.*

> "All power," said the Redeemer as he was leaving the world, "is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach," or make disciples of "all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo! I am with you alway, even *unto the end of the world.*"* (Matt. xxviii. 18–20.)

Now is it conceivable, that any primitive Christian should persuade himself that all nations might be thus discipled, baptized, and brought under the discipline of Christ's laws, in his own lifetime, or within the largest space of time that would admit of his watching (according to this new theory) for the coming of Christ to wind all up?

Again, the parables regarding the gospel kingdom manifestly bear in the same direction. "The field," which was to be sown both with tares and with wheat, is "THE WORLD" (ὁ κοσμος): that is to say, a world-wide kingdom is to be formed, embracing the genuine and the false-hearted subjects of Christ under one visible name; both are to "grow together *until the harvest;*" and the harvest is *the end of the world,*"* when "the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." The same truth is taught in the parable of the *net* cast into the sea, that gathered of every kind; and the same period is fixed for the severance of the good from the bad—"the end of the world." Similar is the import of the parable of the *mustard seed*, and of the *leaven*—holding forth the truth as it is in Jesus, in its progressive advancement, till, like a tree springing from the least of seeds, it ultimately overshadows "the world;" and, like leaven, working its way through the mass of human society, it at length leavens it all.

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* It makes no difference to our present argument, whether αιων here be rendered "world" or "age;" as it is agreed on all hands that the *period* or *state of things* denoted by this word terminates with the second coming of Christ.

And could any intelligent Christian in apostolic times—while the gospel had scarce a footing in the world, and its little inch of ground had to be contested even unto blood—rise from the study of these parables with the persuasion that *the whole world might be thus overshadowed, thus leavened, thus externally subjugated to Christ, and the second advent arrive—all in his own lifetime*, or even in many lifetimes?

I might advert here to those passages which announce the judicial transfer of the kingdom of God from the Jews to the Gentiles, the whole tenor of which was fitted to teach even a primitive Christian, that its duration in *Gentile* hands, ere the Jews should again be brought in, would bear some proportion to its duration in *Jewish* hands, before the admission of the Gentiles.

> "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Matt. xxi. 43.)
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> "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*" (Luke xxi. 24.)

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* See note on preceding page.

> "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* And so all Israel shall be saved." (Rom. xi. 25, 26.)
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> "They asked of him," after his resurrection, "saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time (εν τῳ χρονῳ τουτῳ) restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: *and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jeruaslem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*" (Acts i. 6–8.)

The *spirit* of this last passage is worthy of notice. While not discouraging the hope of an *eventual* restoration of the kingdom to Israel, in some sense at least, he represses all expectation of it in their own day, teaching them that, on his departure, they would have *other work on hand*, with which it would rather become them to take up their attention.

I might refer also to the frequently predicted *degeneracy* to characterize the maturer periods of the Church, or Christianized society.

> "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." (1 Tim. iv. 1–3.)
>
> "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (2 Tim. iii. 1–5.)

> "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation." (2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.)

I do not press this class of passages, because, taken by themselves, I think a primitive Christian, seeing the germs of this degeneracy even then in existence, and "the mystery of iniquity already working," might not unreasonably imagine that the predicted evils might be developed and burst forth in no long time. But, taken in connexion with other passages, such as Christ's commission to Christianise the world, and his parabolic intimations, that, in point of fact, it *would be* visibly Christianised before his second coming, I think these announcements of apostasy from the faith, and social degeneracy, and contemptuous disbelief of coming retribution, within the pale of Christianity, were fitted to repress the expectation of such a speedy end of it all as the new theory demands, in order to a possible watching for it.

There is still a number of passages, greatly clearer to the same effect, of which one example may suffice for all:—

> "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive *until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*" (Acts iii. 20, 21.)

Would any sensible Christian in apostolic times, though unable to tell what might be meant by this "restitution of all things," be encouraged by it to expect the *immediate* or *very speedy* return of Christ to the earth? Would it lead him to think that his Lord, though but *just gone*, might be back again forthwith—that, though scarcely away, though the Spirit who was to supply his place while absent had scarcely made his power to be felt, though his gospel had hardly had time to get a footing in the world, though the heathenism of the empire had scarcely felt the blows of the "stone cut out of the mountain without hands," and the darkness that covered the earth had in no sensible degree fled before the beams of the Sun of Righteousness—that, in this state of things, altogether so infantile and immature, the Redeemer might nevertheless cut the matter short, and surprise both the Church and the world by his second coming? To me this seems incredible. And who will say that, in proportion as one got light on this point, he would be incapacitated for watching for the coming of Christ—that, just as he discerned the true bearing of such announcements, his power to preserve the watchful attitude would necessarily diminish? What sort of theory of "watching" must that be which can stand only with confused apprehensions of the mind of the Spirit—which *required* men to mistake the true scope and intent of the divine intimations regarding Christ's absence in the heavens, and which, just in proportion as they got their eyes opened to the *vast work* which it was emphatically declared had to be done ere Christ could return, left them under a helpless inability to look out and watch for their Lord?

But it may be said, This is expecting too much from the Christians of early times—as if they could have foreseen that, eighteen centuries after his departure, the Redeemer would be found still in the heavens. I answer, No. I suppose them to know nothing of the future but what they were bound to learn even from the Lord's own words. I know well enough how slow they were to receive the truth on this point. Some may think this was at most an amiable weakness, if not something better. I am not so sure of that; nor will I concede that those who, trembling at the word of the Lord, gathered from it that he would be long away, loved him and his appearing less than those who, in opposition to it, clung to their own dream of an immediate appearing.

That the Lord himself gave no countenance to this notion of a speedy return, is evident from the parable of *The Pounds*, which the evangelist tells us was spoken expressly for the purpose of putting it down. "He added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and *because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.* He said, therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." Then follows an account of the trust committed to his professed "servants," the refusal of his "citizens" to submit to him, and—after full time allowed to the one party to submit to him, and to the other to repent of their rebellion—of his return to try and pass sentence upon both (Luke xix. 11–27.) Now, when I say that all this implies *length of time*, I only say what the evangelist expressly tells us, that Christ *meant* by this parable to teach, namely, that the kingdom of God was NOT (as they dreamt) immediately to appear.*

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* "The preface to this parable," says Dr. *Homes*, himself an ardent pre-millennialist, "is a golden key to open its meaning, that we may not rely upon a mere allegory. Christ spake this parable 'because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should *immediately appear*.' It doth not deny the *appearing* of the kingdom—Christ is for it; only, he is against the *immediate* appearance of it. He must before that go away into a far country, viz., to heaven, and leave talents in trust with his servants, giving them *time to employ them*, and be so long *absent* that his enemies grow bold enough to send after him with this high affront, 'that they would not have him to reign over them;' that is, some seeming professors should, by his long absence, grow quite careless of improving the talents, or gifts of endowment, to his honour; and others, by his delay (as they account it), should become professed enemies against him."—*Resurrection Revealed, &c., by Nathaniel Homes, D.D.* 1654. Reprinted 1833. Pp. 265, 266.

"Two false hopes," says *Lisco* on the Parables, "in particular are pointed at in v. 11; the first, that this kingdom should be *immediately*, without any farther delay, set up, against which the intimation in the parable is directed, that it should necessarily be a long time before the return of the nobleman' &c.—*Fairbairn's Translation.* 1840. P. 398.

I suppose it will be said that all the Lord meant to correct was the impression that the kingdom was to be set up "forthwith" (παραχρημα) on his reaching Jerusalem, at that very Passover. Unfortunately for this view, the corresponding parable of *The Talents* sets it completely aside, showing that he meant to go much farther than this. There the period between the departure and the return of Christ is expressly called "a long time," (*μετα δε πολυν χρονον*, Matt. xxv. 19.)[*] Nay, the same truth—the very mention of which is regarded by pre-millennialists with such jealousy, because it breaks down their theory—is expressly taught in the immediately preceding parable of the *Virgins :* "While the bridegroom TARRIED (χρονιζοντος) they all (wise as well as foolish) slumbered and slept." (Matt. xxv. 5.) Thus the Lord in parables intended to teach incessant *watchfulness*, scruples not to warn his disciples *against* expecting his immediate return—openly tells them he would be found *tarrying*—intimates that he would be away *a long time.* And as the express object of these parables was to teach *watchfulness*, it is perfectly plain, that, to *his* view, there was no inconsistency between watching for his return and believing that it was not to occur very soon ; and that, though the actual time of it would always be matter of uncertainty before it arrived, it was not to be expected that the interval would be a brief one.[†] But, according to our new theory of watching these things are perfectly incompatible; insomuch that, unless you can persuade yourself that, for aught you know, the kingdom of glory may "immediately appear," after no "long time," and without any "tarrying" at all, you are incapacitated for watching for it.*

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[*] Πολυν, *multum.* Non est absoluta celeritas adventûs Domini.—BENGEL, ad Matt. xxv. 19.

[†] *Ενταυθα δεικνυσιν ουκ ολιγον τον χρονον εσομενον παλιν τον μεταξυ·* (the interval between his departure and his return :) *τους μαθητας απαγων τον προσδοκαν αυτικα μαλα φανεισθαι την βασιλειαν αυτου.*—CHRYSOST. *Homil. in Matth.* lxxix. (in Gr. Codd. lxxviii.) *On the Parables of the Virgins and Talents.* He repeats the same sentiment a little farther on in the same homily. But how far the golden-mouthed preacher was from supposing that, by such statements about the *length* of Christ's absence, he was lulling his hearers into carnal security, may be seen from such passages as the following, in the immediately preceding ho-

But I have not done with this point. As if to put the matter beyond all doubt, the parable of *The Importunate Widow* (Luke xviii. 1–8) proceeds expressly on the supposition, and carries on its face the warning, that Christ's return would be so long delayed as not only to embolden the scoffers to ask, "Where is the promise of his coming?" but to wear out the patience of all but "God's elect," and to try even them to the uttermost. I am at one with the pre-millennialists in applying this parable, in its primary

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mily: *Εντευθεν μανθανομεν ὅτι ουδε χρονιζει· αὑτη γαρ* (namely, the sentiment, 'My Lord delayeth his coming') *ου του δεσποτου, αλλα της του πονηρου οικετου. ἡ ψηφος· διο και εγκαλειται . . . Τι ουν φησι τα ἑξης; ελευσεται εν ἡμερᾳ ᾗ ου προσδοκᾷ και ὡρᾳ ᾗ ου γινωσκει, και τα εσχατα αυτον διαθησει. Ὁρᾷς πως πανταχου τουτο τιθησι το της αγνοιας δεικνυς χρησιμον, και ταυτῃ ποιων εναγωνιους αιει; κ. τ. λ.*

* "It is worthy of remark," says *Dr. Urwick*, "that *the only errors mentioned in the New Testament respecting the time of our Lord's coming, all consist in dating it too early*. I shall give several examples: 1*st*, The case of the servant represented as saying, 'My Lord delayeth his coming.' . . . . . The servant had taken up a wrong impression of the date when his Master was to be looked for; and as his Master did not show himself according to that false date, the servant, instead of distrusting his own understanding, memory, or calculation, as the case might be, acted on the assumption that his Master would not come as had been promised, and so acted to his ruin." (Has not this case been repeatedly realized among the expectants of the pre-millennial advent?) The next case adduced by Dr. Urwick is that of the *nobleman*, on which we have commented above. "Besides correcting their mistake," says he, about an immediate appearing, "he intimates that both his second advent and the appearing of the kingdom of God were events then at a considerable distance; and the circumstance of his giving the parable to correct the mistake shows it not to have been his will that they should look upon those events as at hand."—Second Advent, pp. 46–48.

historical reference, to the cry of the widowed Church for vengeance against her adversaries.* For this she is encouraged to "pray always, and not faint;" for this she is forewarned she will have to "cry" to her Judge "day and night;" and she is expressly taught that he will "bear *long* with her" ere he come to redress her wrongs. *At last* he will come and "avenge her speedily: *Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh shall he find faith in the earth?*" that is, as the connexion shows, faith that he will come at all.†

Need I ask now whether any primitive Christian of ordinary intelligence could rise from the study of such explicit and reiterated announcements with the belief that, for aught he knew, Christ might come *any day*, or within any such very limited period as that to which our theory restricts the possibility of watching for it?

But they *did* believe this (you say), and the apostle had enough to do to keep the Thessalonians calm in consequence; so lifted were they with the expectation of their Lord's immediate return. (2 Thess. ii. 1, &c.)

True; but is not this just to admit that that Jewish element—*that the kingdom of God should immediately appear*—which the Lord himself had sought to purge out from amongst his half-taught disciples, had nevertheless found its way into the infant Church, and troubled, unhinged, and imperiled it? It took a stirring form in the Thessalonian Church. Their inexperienced minds and warm hearts were plied with the thrilling proclamation, "*that* THE DAY OF CHRIST WAS AT HAND," or "IMMINENT" (ενεστηκεν). And how does the apostle meet their expectation? He fearlessly crushes it; gently insinuating that it had its origin rather in impositions practised upon them by false brethren than in any spontaneous leanings to it among themselves. He "*beseeches them by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*," which was dear to all alike, "and" the transporting prospect of "*our gathering together unto him*," to give no heed to the insinuation, from whatever quarter it might come, "*that the day of Christ was at hand.*"

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* Χηρα, *vidua*, quæ facile læditur, nec facile defenditur inter homines. Talis *ecclesia* mundo videtur.—BENGEL.

† Estque Sermo de Adventu ad *vindictam*, 2 Thess. i. 8, id est de adventu ad novissimum judicium conspicuo; ut appellatio Filii hominis infert: Conf. xvii. 24–30.—*Ibid.*

No such entreaty, we may safely affirm, would ever come from a pre-millennialist—at least of the modern school. He would be afraid of "destroying the possibility of watching." So much, indeed, is this warning in their way, that they take pains to show that our version conveys an erroneous impression of the apostle's meaning, and that the Thessalonian notion was not that the coming of Christ was "at hand," simply, but that it was "imminent," or momentarily to be looked for. Be it so, and what is gained? Let it be conceded that the Thessalonians thought themselves already in the thick of the events which were to usher in the second advent: the question is not what *the Thessalonians thought* about the day of Christ, but what *the apostle says* in opposition to their thought. The writers I allude to affirm that the apostle meant only to deny that the day of Christ had *begun*, or was *actually present*, while he wrote—that "the streaks of dawn" were to be then discerned—that the moment for his appearing had yet arrived.* But what unbiased reader would so understand the passage? Does not the apostle, in the following verses, expressly intimate that a long and complicated series of events had to be developed, the very commencement of which was retarded by an obstacle then in being while he wrote? And is it conceivable that, at the very time when he was announcing this, and announcing it for the very purpose of crushing the expectation of an immediate appearing, he should nevertheless have meant them to expect it *any day*, or *very speedily?**

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* "Some in Thessalonica," says Mr. A. Bonar, "thought that the day of Christ had begun: It is not so, says Paul; there are none of the streaks of dawn yet." (P. 134.) "The Thessalonians," says the Duke of Manchester, "supposed that they were actually entered upon the tribulations of the last days; and the idea is, that they should not be alarmed as though that day had *begun*—was *present then*." (P. 279.) He quotes, in support of this view, Dr. Duffield, an American pre-millennialist. These esteemed brethren remind me that the apostle's word

So manifestly does this famous passage in Thessalonians destroy the modern theory of watching for the coming of Christ, that it has been found necessary to qualify the theory

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(*ενεστηκεν*) expresses a degree of *imminence* beyond that of the word usually rendered "at hand" (*εγγυς*, *εγγιζω*), and think I ought to have adverted to this in my remarks on the passage in the first edition. May I remind them, in turn, that, in Matt. xxiv. 33, this same word, usually rendered "at hand," is employed by our Lord himself to express *the utmost degree of imminence* short of actual presence: "Know," says he, "that it is *near*, *even at the doors*" (*εγγυς, επι θυραις*.)

* Will our recent pre-millennialists listen to two voices from their own camp, upon this point? The first is that of the prince of pre-millennialists and the most sagacious of the students of chronological prophecy. "It was not possible," says Mede, "the apostles should expect the end of the world to be in their own time, when they knew so many things were to come to pass before it as could not be fulfilled in a short time. As, 1. The desolation of Jerusalem, and that not till the seventy weeks were expired: 2. The Jews to be carried captives over all nations, and Jerusalem to be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled; 3. That in the mean time the Roman empire must be ruined, and that which hindered be taken out of the way: 4. That, after this was done, the Man of Sin should be revealed, and domineer his time in the temple and Church of God. . . . 7. That the time should be so long, that in the last days should come scoffers, saying, 'Where is the promise of his coming?' How is it possible they should imagine the day of doom to be so near, when all these things must first come to pass, and not one of them was yet fulfilled? . . . . . Notwithstanding all this, I make no question but, even in the apostles' times, many of the believing Gentiles, mistaking the apostles' admonitions to the Jews of the end of their state approaching, thought the end of the whole world, and the day of the Lord, had been also near;

to some extent. *Events*, it is admitted, may be announced as preceding the second advent: but "the interposition of an *event* is very different from the interposition of a *period:* the latter seems to be incompatible with watchfulness, but not the former; especially when the event is said to be already in progress, as is done by the apostle when he says, 'The mystery of iniquity doth already work.' For this no time is given, and it is the absence of time that is the foundation of watchfulness: It is the presence of time as an element that destroys the possibility of watching; and it is the absence of that element that produces the watchful spirit." *

This distinction, however, between *events* and *periods*

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whom, therefore, St. Paul (2 Thess. ii.) beseeches to be better informed, because that day should not come until the apostasy came first, and the Man of Sin were revealed." (*Apostasy of the Latter Times*, chap. xv. *Works*, Book III.)

The other voice on this subject is that of Bishop Horsley, also a pre-millennialist. "The apostle's expression," says he, speaking of the fourth chapter of 1st Thessalonians, "was so strong, that his meaning was mistaken, or as I rather think, misrepresented. There seems to have been a sect in the apostolic age, in which sect, however, the apostles themselves were not, as some have absurdly maintained, included; but there seems to have been a sect which looked for the resurrection in their own time. Some of these persons seem to have taken advantage of St. Paul's expressions in this passage, to represent him as favouring their opinion. This occasioned the second epistle to the Thessalonians, in which the apostle peremptorily decides against that doctrine, maintaining that the Man of Sin is to be revealed, and a long consequence of events to run out, before the day of judgment can come; and he desires that no expression of his may be understood of its speedy arrival; which proves that whatever he had said of the day of his coming as *at hand*, was to be understood only of the *certainty* of that coming." (Serm. I.) In a previous part of the same Sermon, the Bishop more fully develops the sense in which he understands the day of Christ to have been "at hand" in the apostles' days. The reader will find this extracted in the note at the close of this chapter.

* Mr. H. Bonar, p. 91 quoted with approbation by the Duke of Manchester, p. 281.

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does nothing to save the new theory; for, as we have seen, the events interposed by the Lord himself and by his apostles before the second advent, are such as no rational man in the apostolic age, duly reflecting upon them, could imagine to be possibly over in his own day. To a primitive Christian, therefore, "the possibility of watching for Christ's coming" was as effectually "destroyed" by interposed *events* as by interposed *periods.*

Besides, are not periods interposed as well as events? So soon as the Apocalypse came into general circulation, the Church knew that Antichrist's career would extend over a certain definite period—expressed in the three forms of "*days*," "*months*," and "*times.*" An attempt is made to blunt the force of this fact, by alleging that symbolical language, and the shortest periods, were purposely selected, to prevent the Church being lulled into security by a plain disclosure of the time. It has not, however, deterred the writer whose argument we are now examining from lifting the veil, and intimating that a definite period of *twelve hundred and sixty years* was intended by these mystic numbers as the time of Antichrist's reign? He will, probably, console himself with the thought, that, living in a day when the expiry of this period may be speedily expected, he is in no danger of being lulled by his knowledge of the time, or hindered by it from watching for his Lord's coming But did not others arrive at the same conclusion long ago, as to these 1260 years of Antichrist's reign? As early, at least, as the Reformation, this was becoming the decided judgment of divines; and as the views of the students of prophecy, after that, grew more definite, calculations were ventured on as to "the time of the end," most of which *threw it considerably beyond their own day.* This remark applies to some of the most eminent pre-millennialists, quite as much as to the other students of the prophetic word.

Now, my question is, Did these good men and able divines *destroy by their calculations the possibility of their watching for Christ?* Absurd surely it were to affirm this; and yet if not, how worthless is this whole theory of watching?*

It might strengthen these remarks to advert to the view which the early chiliasts took of the dates. They appear, for example, to have adopted universally the Jewish tradition, that, after a *six thousand years'* duration of the world there would be a *sabbatical millenary;* and, as they identified this with the millennial reign of Christ and his saints, it is not very easy to see how, with all their ignorance of the true chronology of the world, they could look for the second advent *quite* so soon as the new theory requires. One thing is certain, that LACTANTIUS—a chiliast of the *fourth* century—did not look for the second advent sooner than about *two hundred years;* and this, be it observed, he gives as the result of inquiries into the subject by all those most skilled in such matters.†

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* These remarks on the 1260 years do not apply to those (such as the Duke of Manchester) who take the "*days*" literally, as denoting just *three years and a half.* I cannot go into that question here; and am content to leave the matter, as far as *they* are concerned, to rest upon the *events* interposed before the second advent, which I think quite sufficient to settle it, independently of the *periods.*

† "Fortasse nunc quispiam requirat, quando ista quæ diximus sint futura: jam superius ostendi. Completis annorum sex millibus, mutationem ipsam fieri oportere: et jam propinquare illum summum conclusionis extremæ diem, de signis, quæ a prophetis dicta sunt, licet noscere. Prædixerunt enim signa, quibus consummatio temporum expectanda sit nobis in singulos dies, atque timenda. Quando tamen compleatur hæc summa, docent ii qui de temporibus scripserunt, colligentes ex literis sanctis, et ex variis historiis, quantus sit numerus annorum ab exordio mundi: qui licet varient, et aliquantulum numeri eorum summa dissentiat, omnis tamen expectatio non amplius quâm ducentorum videtur annorum." (DIV. INSTITT. *Lib.* vii. c. XXV.

In concluding our investigation of the question of time, as it affects the duty of watching for Christ's coming, I would fain leave on the reader's mind the *spirit* of that apostolic warning to the Thessalonians on which I have been animadverting. The apostle does more than *correct* the error about the imminency of the day of Christ · he alludes also to the *way* in which they were solicited on the subject, and the *effects* which the delusion would produce upon their minds. He warns them against being practised upon, either, *first*, " by spirit"—a pretended spirit of prophecy, foretelling the nearness of the advent ; or, *secondly*, " by word"—any supposed testimony uttered in favour of this view of the advent by him or other inspired men ; or, *thirdly*, " by letter as from us"—forged letters from the apostle himself, announcing " that the day of Christ was" chronologically " at hand." Now, if the pre-millennialists be right, if both their doctrine and their way of urging it be scriptural, is it not strange that designing men, instead of teaching the DISTANCE, should have set themselves systematically to urge the NEARNESS of Christ's coming—that they should have found their interest to lie so much in possessing the Church with the belief of Christ's nearness, as to lay false prophecy, pretended apostolic discourses, and forged letters all under contribution, to give currency and weight to this view of the advent? It would be an interesting inquiry, what such parties could gain by the reception of that opinion? Perhaps the history of religious delusions would throw some light on this question. I think it would not be difficult to show that some of the prime delusions to which powerful but enthusiastic and feverish minds have given birth, have been associated with the very expectation to which the apostle refers, and have derived from that expectation a *pabulum* which has rallied them when otherwise languishing, and without which they would neither have had the attractions which invested them while they lived, nor have been kept so long from sinking into the merited oblivion which at length they have found. Whether it was some perception of this that filled the apostle with such alarm at the notion in question, and such anxiety to dislodge it, we shall not affirm. But his beseeching tone, the particularity with which he notices it, the systematic way in which he sets himself to meet it, and the singularly ample detail with which he lays out the scheme of events *that would throw the advent into the distant future*—all show that he saw some peculiar evils in the womb of that notion, and contemplated with concern and grief its possible progress in the church. Of what *sort* these evils would be, we have a hint given us in the two pregnant words by which he describes the effects of the notion upon those who give heed to it. He beseeches them not to be " soon," or quickly, as by sudden impulse, " *shaken in mind*" (σαλευθηναι)—agitated—disturbed ; or to be " *troubled*" (ϑροεισθαι—as one is on " hearing of wars and rumours of wars," Matt. xxiv. 6, Gr.), by the assertion, " that the day of Christ was at hand." The thing pointed at is such an arrestment of the mind as tends to unnerve it ; a feverish excitement, which tends to throw the mind off its balance, and so far unfit it for the duties of life—as in the rumours of wars of which the parallel passage makes mention—the very opposite of that tranquil and bright expectancy which realizes the *certainty* rather than the *chronology* of the Lord's coming. And I would appeal to the whole history of pre-millennialism, whether this *feverish excitability* has, or has not, been found a prevailing element, and the parent of not a little that is erratic both in doctrine and in practice.

Thus have I weighed all that has been advanced to prove the impossibility of watching for Christ's coming on the common view of it, or rather on any view of it which does not admit of our expecting it almost any moment. I have done so with a minuteness and at a length which, if the intrinsic force of the objection scarcely demanded, the stress laid upon it by the most recent pre-millennialists and its apparent plausibility may well excuse. I think I have shown it to be entirely fallacious; and not only so, but that it is the very notion which the apostle characterises as feverish, and sets himself to crush, as usurping the place of the tranquil and truly quickening expectation of "our" simultaneous "gathering together unto Him," at his glorious appearing. It is high time that the immense difference between these two expectations should be brought out and realized. Till that be done, one can scarcely obtain a hearing with some ardent minds. They are so afraid of being thrown off their watch for the coming of Christ, that unless they think every thing ripe and ready for his coming *to-morrow*, they do not see how they can be kept in the scriptural attitude of "looking for him." Having exposed the fallacy on which this is founded, we shall no more be borne down by the question, How the common view can possibly stand with the Scriptural prominence of the Lord's coming, and the required watchfulness of the church in the view of it? Holding that to be a settled point, we shall refuse to be again crossed in the open field of Scriptural inquiry. In point of *chronology*, "the day of Christ was" *not* "at hand" in Paul's time, and he was positively fearful lest it should be thought that it was. Some day, of course, it *will* be chronologically "at hand;" but, as this involves a question of *dates* and *times*—as to which men are liable to mistake, and some in the primitive church did mistake, and had to be told explicitly that they were under a delusion—the apostle would have us not mix up with the great and stirring certainties of the Lord's impending advent any speculations, however lawful or even laudable in their own place, about the *chronological nearness* of it. If it was "at hand" eighteen centuries ago—if, when the beloved disciple was in rapt communication with him at Patmos, Jesus could greet him with the glad announcement, "Behold I come *quickly*"—and no deception—faith can now, *precisely as then*, echo that disciple's sweet response, "Amen: Even so, come, Lord Jesus." For faith lays hold not on chronological dates or arithmetical calculations—useful though these are in their own place—but on "the Strength of Israel, who will not lie," as he speaks in the promises of his blessed word. What faith believes, hope brings near. To the hope of the believer, even as to the Lord himself, "*a thousand years are as one day.*" Though chronologically far off, if so it should be found—no matter. Faith sees him coming "leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills." And neither, on the one hand, in the spirit of sloth and carnality, which says, "My Lord delayeth his coming," nor, on the other hand, in the spirit of fanatical and excited expectation as to a present appearance; but in that sublime state of mind which the apostle calls "the PATIENCE OF HOPE," it is the privilege of faith to say—alike when chronologically far off and chronologically near, and as it were in holy defiance of mere dates, because ready for them all alike—"Make haste, my Beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices!" Song, viii. 14.*

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* "St. Peter," says Bishop HORSLEY, "tells us, in his second epistle, that the terms 'soon' and 'late' are to be very differently understood, when applied to the great operations of Providence and to the ordinary occurrences of human life. 'The Lord,' says he, is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness. One day is with the Lord as

a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.' 'Soon' and 'late' are words whereby a comparison is rather intended of the mutual proportion of different intervals of time than the magnitude of any one by itself defined; and the same thing may be said to be coming either soon or late, according as the distance of it is compared with a longer or shorter period of duration. Thus, although the day of judgment was removed undoubtedly by an interval of many ages from the age of the apostles, yet it might in their days be said to be at hand, if its distance from them was but a small part of its original distance from the creation of the world; that is, if its distance then was but a small part of the whole period of the world's existence, which is the standard in reference to which, so long as the world shall last, all other portions of time may be by us most properly denominated long or short. There is again another use of the words 'soon' and 'late,' whereby any portion of time, taken singly, is understood to be compared, not with any other, but with the number of events that are to come to pass in it in natural consequence and succession. If the events are few in proportion to the time, the succession must be slow, and the time may be called *long;* if they are many, the succession must be quick, and the time may be called *short*, in respect of the number of events, whatever be the absolute extent of it. It seems to be in this sense that expressions, denoting *speediness of event*, are applied by the sacred writers to our Lord's coming. In the days of Messiah the Prince, in the interval between our Lord's ascension and his coming again to judgment, the world was to be gradually prepared and ripened for its end. The apostles were to carry the tidings of salvation to the extremities of the earth: They were to be brought before kings and rulers, and to water the new-planted churches with their blood. Vengeance was to be executed on the unbelieving Jews, by the destruction of their city, and the dispersion of their nation. The Pagan idolatry was to be extirpated,—the Man of Sin to be revealed. Jerusalem is yet to be trodden down. The remnant of Israel is to be brought back,—the elect of God to be gathered from the four winds of heaven. And when the apostles speak of that event as *at hand* which is to *close* this great scheme of Providence—a scheme in its parts so extensive and so various—they mean to intimate *how busily the great work is going on*, and *with what confidence*, from what they saw accomplished in their own days, *the first Christians might expect in due time the promised consummation.*"—(Serm. I.)

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHURCH, OR MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST, COMPLETE AT HIS COMING.

Our preliminary inquiries being now concluded, the way is open for bringing out the mind of the Spirit on the great question at issue, namely, Whether the fleshly state at the second advent, instead of coming to an end, will only be then re-constituted and inaugurated as one of the departments of a millennial kingdom;—whether, after one portion of Christ's people have appeared with him in glory, for ever beyond the experience of imperfection and the reach of evil, another portion of them will be left below for a thousand years in their mortal bodies, subject to all the imperfections of the life of *faith* and the state of *grace*, as contradistinguished from the *glory* of the risen and changed saints. The Scripture evidence against this theory I propose to arrange under a series of propositions, the first of which will occupy the present chapter.

PROPOSITION FIRST:

THE CHURCH WILL BE ABSOLUTELY COMPLETE AT CHRIST'S COMING.

If this can be established, the whole system falls to the ground. If all that are to be saved will be brought in before Christ comes, of course there can be none to come in after his advent, and in that case the *lower* department of the expected kingdom disappears.

The difficulty here is not to find proof of the point, but any thing like evidence to the contrary. No plain reader of the Bible ever doubts that the Church will be completed ere Christ comes; not a few even of the pre-millennialists themselves have been constrained to admit it—with what effect upon the sobriety of their own views we shall by and by see; and even those who deny it give evidence of the extreme weakness of their ground, and virtually concede the point, by admitting that "*the Bride*" of Christ *will* be complete, though they contend that the whole number of *the saved* (whom they distinguish from "the Bride") will not.

The following passages are quite decisive:—

> 1 Cor. xv. 23. "But each party, (ἑκαστος δε) in his own order: *Christ* the first-fruits; afterward *they that are Christ's* AT HIS COMING."

Any one who even glances at this sublime chapter will see, that the burden of it is the resurrection of believers *in general*—of "them that are Christ's," considered as the second Adam. As their death is deduced from their federal relation to the first Adam, so their resurrection is argued from their federal connection with the second. "As in Adam (they) all die, even so in Christ shall (they) all be made alive."* And it is immediately after this that the apostle says, "But each (party) in his own order"—that is, the federal Head and those federally related to him—"Christ the *first-fruits;* afterward they that are Christ's (the *full harvest* of them) at his coming."

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* So I incline to understand the words, the resurrection of believers being the one only case to which the apostle speaks throughout the chapter. But however this be, my argument from the passage will remain the same, provided it be admitted that the party or parties federally related to the first and second Adams are discoursed of as a *whole*, and not in fragmentary portions or classes.

Can any thing be more decisive than this? What commentator explains it otherwise?* What unbiased reader ever understood it otherwise? Is it not, then, a very bold liberty with the Word of God to say, that only a *fractional part* of "them are Christ's" are here spoken of?—that it means only such of them as shall have lived before the millennium?—that there will be millions of

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* Nihil, says Luther on this verse, de privatâ resurrectione agitur, quomodo unus atque alter a mortuis surrexerit, sed *de communi resurrectione*, deque illius caussâ et capite, quod est Christus. . . . . Ipse enim suâ horâ surrexit, ita nos quoque, ubi hora nostra venerit, quoque resurgemus et ipsum sequemur. *Neque enim ante nos excitare statuit, quam omnes simul quotquot ipsius sumus congregari fuerimus.* . . . Hoc enim series et ordo postulant, ut ipse primus sit, qui stratâ viâ fores (quod dicitur) aperiret et immortalitatem apportaret: Deinde *omnia sua membra* ordine congregaret, *quibus resurrectio ab æterno destinata est*, ut *uno die omnes Christiani simul* (that is, as the connexion shows, all Christ's members, eternally ordained to life and resurrection) *in lucem prodirent quem ipse ordinavit*, atque ita cum eo perpetuo viverent. . . . . . Ita Christus in suo, et nos in nostro ordine manemus. . . . . . . Neque enim clanculum aut in angulo ista agentur, ut hic unus alibi alius resurgat, sed propalam, universo mundo inspectante, morte, peccato, et omnibus acerbitatibus juxta obolitis, et præter vitam et gaudium perenne nihil erit reliqui.—*Enarr.* in xv. cap. i. Cor.

Quemadmodum, says Calvin, in primitiis, totius anni proventus consecrabatur, ita vis resurrectionis Christi ad nos omnes diffunditur. . . . . Christus, cujus officium est nobis restituere quæ in Adam perdidimus, nobis vitæ causa est; ejusque resurrectio hypostasis et pignus est nostræ. . . . . Satis sit nobis, quod nunc in Christo habemus primitias: nobis autem adventus ejus tempus erit ad resurgendum.

Paulus, says Bengel, who held in some things with the pre-millennialists, loquitur hic de piis, quorum *απαρχη*, *primitiæ*, Christus est; atque hi, ut in Adamo *omnes* moriuntur, sic etiam in Christo omnes vivicabuntur.—Οἱ *του Χριστου, qui sunt Christi:* Suave polyptoton, Χριστος, Χριστου. Christiani sunt quasi appendix *της απαρχης, primitiarum.*—Εν *τη παρουσιᾳ αυτου, in adventu ejus:* Tum erit ordo Christianorum, 1 Thess. iv. 16. *Non alii post alios resurgent illo tempore.*

"them that are Christ's," that will *not* be "made alive' (in the sense of resurrection or instantaneous transformation) "at his coming," but remain in their mortal and unglorified state upon earth for at least a thousand years *after* "his coming"? There may, for aught that this passage says, be mortal men *out of Christ*, living upon earth after he comes—we shall speak to that by and by—but *in Christ* there cannot be one. For here we find *the whole federal offspring of the second Adam*, made alive together—at his coming. As surely as "Christ, the first-fruits" of his covenanted people, "was made alive in ***his*** order, so surely shall "they that are Christ's be made alive in *their* order—at (*ἐν*) his coming."*

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* If any thing could add to the strength of the above argument, it would be the replies that have been given to it as it appeared in my first edition.

Mr. BICKERSTETH'S statement, which is not very clear, amounts to this, that nothing is here said *of those living* "*after the advent*." Very true, because there *will be* none. Mr. B. says, 1 Cor. xv. 23 is "general." So it is, and it is precisely on this that I found. It makes no separation of "them that are Christ's" from each other—it embraces all that federally belong to the second Adam under one brief denomination, *Christ's*, and quickens them, not in *parcels*, but *together*, "at his coming." —(*Divine Warning*, Fourth Edition, p. 312.)

Mr. A. BONAR. "There is surely nothing in 1 Cor. xv. 23, opposed to our view. The scope of the chapter does not deal in the *number* of saints, as Mr. B. would hint, but simply in the *mode and principle* of the resurrection."—(*Redemption*, p. 130.) That this chapter deals in the *number* of saints, I never hinted nor imagined. The *reality* of their resurrection is the main theme of the chapter. In handling this, the apostle opens up "the mode and principle of their resurrection," namely, their federal oneness with Christ as the second Adam; and, in expatiating on this great topic, he incidentally announces that each has "his own order" of rising—the *head* and *those in union with him*, and that the time of the latter is "at his coming." What has Mr. B. advanced to show that this ought not to be taken *absolutely*, for the whole body of those in covenant-union with Christ? *Nothing*.

THE DUKE OF MANCHESTER. "They that are Christ's at his coming, we say, must be limited to those of Christ who shall have died before

The next passage I have to adduce in proof of the completeness of the Church at Christ's coming, is

> Eph. v. 25–27. "Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish."

It is impossible to doubt what "Church" is here meant, for it is defined by three bright unmistakeable marks within the bosom of the passage itself. It is "the Church which Christ loved" from everlasting; it is "the Church for which he gave himself" in the fulness of time; it is "the Church which he is now sanctifying and cleansing by the word," as "with the washing of water:"—It is THIS CHURCH, even the WHOLE LOVED, RANSOMED, AND PURIFIED COMPANY, which Christ will "present to himself a GLORIOUS CHURCH." When? Clearly *at his coming.* But should any hesitate about this, I will put it beyond doubt by comparing it

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that time; excluding those of Christ who shall be alive at that time, as also the people of Israel, who will not be Christ's until his coming, and the nations who shall join themselves to the Lord after he shall have come. This, it will be observed, is the obvious sense, and is no departure from the literal meaning."—(*Finished Mystery*, p. 283.) This just means that, provided we know from *other* passages that there will be saints living in the flesh *after* the second advent, we must (to make Scripture consistent with itself) limit "them that are Christ's" in *this* passage, and who are to be made alive at his coming, to such of them as have lived *before* that time. But I am showing that the whole scope of this chapter, and particularly of the verse I have been dwelling on, *embraces in one federal company all that are or ever shall be Christ's, and makes them simultaneously alive at the coming of their Head.* His Grace never touches that part of the argument.

I leave this, my first passage, then, to speak for itself, satisfied that its testimony to the completeness of the Church, or the redeemed of the Lord, at his coming, is irrefragable.

with two or three passages, in which the same delightful truth is expressed, and nearly in the same terms.

> 2 Thess. i. 10. "He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe—in that day."

The *party* in this passage is the same as in the former; there it is "the Church," loved, purchased, and purified from every stain; here it is "his saints"—"all them that believe." The *purpose* in view, too, is in both passages the same. In the former passage it is to present it to himself "a glorious Church" (ἱνα παραστησῃ αυτην ἑαυτῷ ενδοξον). Calvin takes the allusion to be to the *bridal beauty* in which she will appear before him.* So Bengel.† And as this same apostle says he had "espoused" the Corinthians "to one Husband, that he might *present* them as a chaste virgin to Christ" (παρθενον ἁγνην παραστῆσαι τῳ Χριστῳ, 2 Cor. xi. 2), there can be no doubt, I think, that they are correct. And does not the other passage express the same sublime purpose with only a slight diversity of conception—"to be *glorified* in his saints, and *admired* in all them that believe"—to be greeted with "the admiration" and get "the glory" which is his due, when beheld by the side of his spotless and resplendent Church, as its Life, Head, and Husband? Well, and when is this? Why, this shall be the very purpose of his advent. "*He shall come*" to receive this "glory in his saints," this "admiration in *all* them that believe—*in that day*." This is decisive. As it determines the *time* of presentation, so equally the *party* presented, by definitions not to be misunderstood.*

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* Hanc quidem primum sub figurâ describit, quæ argumento conveniebat. Ut sit *speciosa*, inquit. Nam sicuti formæ elegantia in uxore causa est amoris, ita Christus ecclesiam, Sponsam suam, ornat sanctitate, ut sit hoc benevolentiæ pignus.

† *Ινα παραστησῃ ἑαυτῷ, ut sisteret sibi ipsi:* tanquam Sponso—Ενδοξον, *gloriosam:* Ex amore Christi debemus haurire æstimationem sanctificationis. Quæ Sponsa contemnit ornatum a Sponso oblatum?

To the same effect Jude says—

> "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy," &c. (Jude 24, *στησαι κατενωπιον της δοξης αὐτου εν αγαλλιασει.*)

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* Mr. Bickersteth and the Duke of Manchester admit that the time of presentation, in the former of these passages, is the second advent, but distinguish between "the Bride" to be then presented to Christ, and the whole number of *the saved.* In this view, Mr. Bickersteth says, the passage "implies just the reverse to the objection; for when do the Bride and Bridegroom exclude friends, or companions, or servants? The nations of the saved are distinguished and contrasted with the Bride." (p. 312.) "Mr. Brown (says the Duke of Manchester), I apprehend, supposes that every individual who shall be saved, or who shall derive any benefit ('accompanying salvation') from the work of Christ during all the different dispensations, from the days of Abel down to the last soul who shall be brought into the fold, will form part of 'the Bride, the Lamb's wife,' one of the mystical body of Christ. I do not think that either the language of Scripture, or the character of the dispensations is in accordance with this idea," (p. 284). I shall come by and by to this imaginary distinction between the Bride and others belonging to Christ. All I wish to notice here is the admission of these brethren, that the *time of presentation* is the *coming of Christ.*

Mr. A. Bonar differs doubly from them. He concedes to us that the *party* to be presented embraces *all the redeemed;* but he denies that the second advent is the *time* of presentation. "The idea of the passage is, that the *final issue* of his dealings with this Church shall be his presenting to himself every member of it holy and without blemish, whether these be saints of Patriarchal, Jewish, Gentile, or Millennial times. There is not a word here as to the *time* of this presentation, so that nothing can be proved by it," (pp. 130, 131.) I shall leave the reader to judge, whether the *time* of the Church's glorious presentation to Christ, as here announced, be not that of his second coming, when he has read what I have said on it above.

On the other passage (2 Thess. i. 10), Mr. Bickersteth informs us, that the best copies read "all them who *have* believed," (*τοις πιστευσασιν*) adding that "it is thus expressly *retrospective*," or meant of those who believe *before* the advent. We entirely agree with him, because we admit no believers *after* it.

Here the *thing* to be done, and, beyond all doubt, the *time* of doing it, are the same as in the two former passages.

Similarly, again, does Paul write to the Colossians:—

> "And you, that were sometime alienated, and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his sight." (Col. i. 22, *παραστησαι ὑμας ἁγιους και αμωμους και ανεγκλητους κατενωπιον αυτου.*)

Here the same remark applies, both as to the *purpose* and the *time.*

One other parallel I give from the same apostle.

> "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." (1 Thess. iii. 13.)*

The presentation of the Church here is to God, even our *Father*—in the other passages it is by Christ "unto *Himself.*" But as in both cases it is at his "coming" that this presentation of the Church takes place, it is obvious that one and the same thing, under different aspects, is intended in all.

And now, I think it impossible to resist the combined force of these passages. One broad magnificent conception pervades them all—

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* It is the first part of this verse to which I direct attention, not the last—his coming "with all his saints;" although I have no doubt this means *believers.* Bengel, without any reason, as I think, takes the term "saints" here to comprehend *angels* as well as *men;* though the men he recognizes in the passage are not a fraction of Christ's people, but the whole body of the elect—"*electos e terrâ.*" Prebendary Lowth, as Mr. A. Bonar notices, seems to restrict the term exclusively to *angels;* though the remark, being incidental, and occurring in his Commentary on Zechariah, may have been grounded on slight examination of the New Testament use of the term. Calvin, as might be supposed, understands it exclusively of believing *men*, and as *one company.* But, however the term be understood, it will not affect the object for which I quote the verse.

The absolute *completeness* of the Church at Christ's coming,
The spotless *purity* in which it will then be presented, "as a chaste virgin," to Christ,
The resplendent *glory* in which, as "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," she shall then be "adorned for her husband,"
The *praise* which will redound from such a spectacle to the Redeemer himself,
The rapturous *admiration* of Him which it will kindle, and,
The ineffable *complacency* with which the whole will be regarded by "God, even our Father."

Thus have I established *the completeness of the Church at Christ's coming.* I have limited myself to a few passages, on the import of which all commentators, ancient and modern, are agreed; but it is written as with a sunbeam on the pages of the New Testament, and those who call it in question, are driven to seek support from highly figurative portions of Old Testament prophecy, and from the corresponding book of the New Testament, the Apocalypse. Now it is an old maxim in divinity, that *doctrines are not to be built upon prophetic or symbolical scripture.** The principle is one of undoubted soundness, and of indispensable necessity as a bulwark against the abuse of figurative language. *Pre-millennialism*, however, *is one entire product of the reverse of this principle;* and in the case before us, it can produce nothing in proof of the *incompleteness* of the Church at Christ's coming, but what is studded all over with figures. How slender is the support derived even from this source, may be seen in the note below.[*]

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* *Theologia prophetica non est argumentativa.*

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[*] Two passages especially are relied on. The first is,

Zech. xiv. 5. "The Lord my God shall come, and *all the saints with thee:*" (עִמָּךְ׃—lxx. *μετ' αυτου*, reading עִמּוֹ).

The argument from this passage is, that we have here Christ's second coming with all his saints *before* the millennium, when the number of the saved is confessedly incomplete; and therefore only such of them can be meant as have lived up to that time.

Answer (1.) By "saints," some pre-millennialists understand not *men* but *angels*, as Deut. xxxiii. 2. In that case the passage has nothing to do with our point.

(2.) If *men* be meant, the question still remains, In what sense is it meant that he "comes," and they with him? That it is his *second personal* coming, "in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein being burnt up," (2 Pet. iii. 10)—is so far from being evident, that the minute details of what is to happen at the time here predicted, as we find them in the context—all in that case to be taken literally—are totally irreconcilable with it. If the prediction relate to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, as the majority of commentators have thought, the coming of the Lord here announced must mean his coming in vengeance to sweep away "those his enemies, that would not that he should reign over them," and to establish on the ruins of a carnalized and hostile Judaism the kingdom of his grace.[†] Or, if the scene predicted relate to the conflicts that are to issue in the establishment of the *millennial* kingdom on the ruins of the antichristian interest, the sense will be very much the same—the saints in the great crisis of his cause, "coming (in plain flesh and blood) to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." In favour of this sense, I might refer to Rev. xvii. 14: "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and *they that are* WITH HIM (*μετ' αυτου*) are called, and chosen and faithful:" also to ch. xii. 7. 8,

[†] LUTHER, who applies this prediction to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, refers the words before us to *the appearance made for Christ's interest at that time.* "Hoc," says he, "bene et congrue sonat de extremo die; sed quia non convenit antecedens textus, in hac persto sententiâ, quod Christus qui egressus est per Evangelium in bellum, ita quoque venit per suum Spiritum, cum suis apostolis, conscionatoribus, et toto Christianorum cœtu, longe alio pacto, quâm cum veniret ex deserto, cum suis sanctis, de quo adventu Moses, Deut. xxxii. (xxxiii.) capite, canit." (*Enarr.* in Cap. xiv.. Proph. Zach.)

If then, Christ, when he comes the second time, is to reign on the earth for a thousand years, it will not be over

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11: "Michael and *his angels* fought, and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not: And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb;" &c., where Christ's soldiers, in the war against Paganism, are first represented as "the angels of Michael," and then seen to be just believing men fighting the good fight of faith, and coming off more than conquerors, through him that loved them. If any thing like this be the sense of the passage in Zechariah, it has no bearing on the *glorified* state.

(3.) The whole context of this passage is highly figurative, and involved in difficulty, as is evident from the diversities among commentators; and it shows great poverty of proof to build upon such a passage, in a question confessedly of vast moment, on which the New Testament abounds in the plainest statements.

The other passage is from that book of symbols, the Apocalypse, chap. xix. 6–9:—

> "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

The argument here is, that the marriage of the Lamb with his Bride, or the Church, is said to take place immediately after the fall of Antichrist, or before the millennium, when the number of the elect will certainly not be complete.

In reply to this, it may be enough to say that this cannot be the *actual consummation* of the Marriage between Christ and his Church in glory, because in the two last chapters of this book (which most of my opponents agree with me in referring to the *everlasting* state) the Church is described as "descending," after the millennium is all over, "as a bride adorned for her husband;" and it is rather awkward to suppose a bridal preparation and a presentation of the parties to each other *a thousand years after the union has been consummated.**

"Christ's marriage with his Church," says **DURHAM**, "is three ways spoken of in Scripture: 1. As it cometh by the offer of the gospel, wherein many are espoused,

* BENGEL.—Ἑτοιμασεν ἑαυτην, *paravit se*, i. e. cœpit parare se, ut πεπιστευκα, ηγαπηκα, ηλπικα, *nactus sum fidem, &c.* DE NUPTIIS ISTIS, vide c. xxi 2, 9 ss.

believing men still left in their mortal bodies upon earth, it will not be over the tribes of *Israel* in a converted state, nor over a converted *Gentile* world. Living Christianity will have disappeared from the earth: The number of the elect accomplished, the whole body transfigured, and thus prepared, as a Bride adorned for her Husband, "will with gladness and rejoicing have been brought—will have entered into the King's palace." This is "OUR GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM,"* this is "THE UNIVERSAL CONCOURSE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST-BORN REGISTERED IN HEAVEN,"† for which preparation is now making, and to which every believer is in spirit already joined.

What do the pre-millennialists say to this? It divides them into two classes: *one* class boldly avowing the completeness of the Church *before* the millennium, and doing their best, by various adjustments of their system, to avoid the harsh consequences which flow from it; while the *other* class, recoiling from the conclusions, take refuge in a denial of the premises from which they flow—affirming that the

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and by faith engaged to him.—(2 Cor. xi. 2.) Thus it hath been since Christ's days; his marriage was then, and many were and are invited.—(Matt. xxii. &c.) 2. As it is consummated and perfected at the end, when the queen is brought to the king, and abideth with him for ever.—(Ps. xlv.) 3. There is an intervening step, when the fulness of the Gentiles and the Jews shall be brought in together, that is, marrying eminently, because it is the grafting again of the old branches, and the bringing back of a divorced wife, for a time forsaken. . . . . And, as in scripture, there is a threefold resurrection—1. By the gospel, which was and is alway (John v. 14); 2 At the end, which is general, as the first is partial; 3. When Jews and Gentiles shall come in together, which is (Rom. xi) as life from the dead, which is between the two former—so may we consider the Church's marriage, which is the same with the resurrection, in a threefold consideration also. It is not the *first* nor the *second* marriage that is mentioned here; for it is, in a singular way, such a marriage as was not before, and the *last* end is not intended here; for the last marriage doth not comprehend an accession to the militant Church, as this doth here, going along with the Pope's overthrow before the end."—(*Commentary upon the Book of the Revelation*, 1658, *ad loc.*)

* ‘Ημων επισυναγωγη επ᾽ αυτον. 2 Thess. ii. 1.

† Πανηγυρις και εκκλησια προτοτοκων εν ουρανοῖς απογεγραμμενων. Heb. xii. 23.

Church, so far from being complete at Christ's coming, will have an accession of myriads of believers *after* his coming, from among the Jews and Gentiles over whom he is to reign. Let us try it both ways, and see where we are on either supposition.

First: Let us hear one or two of the former class—who place the Reign upon earth *after* the completion of all the elect.

Homes, a contemporary of Mede, two centuries ago, placed the conflagration, the creation of the new heavens and new earth, the resurrection of all the deceased, and the change of all the living saints—embracing the whole number of the elect—*before* the millennium.

> "In that new creation," says he, "Christ restores all things to their perfection, and every believer to his; to the end that all believers may jointly and co-ordinately rule over the whole world, and all things therein, next under Christ their Head. I say *all*, and not a part only, as some unwarily publish. And I say *jointly*, and not one part of saints to usurp authority over the rest, as many dream. And *co-ordinately*, all upon *equal terms*, not some saints to rule by deputies made of the rest of saints, as men seem to interpret."*

But will there be no other men on the new earth besides these risen and changed saints—to perpetrate the rebellion and suffer the perdition predicted, at the end of the thousand years? Yes, myriads; but all *unconverted and inconvertible.* None but "open and obstinate ungodly men" being destroyed by the conflagration, the rest will be "reserved out of the fire to be an appendix of the new creation, as Lactantius, Sixtus Senensis, and Dr. Twisse understand." These, "by virtue of the Adamic covenant, shall be restored in soul and body to the natural perfection which Adam had in the state of innocency; but being mutable, they shall fall, when in like manner they are assaulted by Satan. Out of these shall spring the brood of Gog and Magog."

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* Resurrection Revealed, *ut supra*, p. 279.

"The Church, being now as heaven on earth, the false-hearted spawn of future Gog and Magog shall be remote on earth, near their future hell. . . . But if these hypocrites were nearer the Church, they might perhaps be converted? We answer, No; for it is (if we may use that word) the fate of the millenary period, I mean, God's righteous peremptory sentence, that *as all that time there shall be* NO DE*generating of believers, so no more* RE*generating of any unbelievers*."*

Burnet, a little later, in his celebrated "*Theory of the Earth*," agrees with Homes as to the time of the conflagration, the new heavens and new earth, and the completion of the elect to reign, in a resurrection state, on the new earth.

"Neither," says he, "is there any distinction made, that I find, by St. John, of *two sorts of saints in the millennium*, the one in heaven (in resurrection bodies), the other upon earth (in a mortal state). This is such an idea of the millennium as to my eye hath neither beauty nor foundation in Scripture."†

But whereas, according to him, *all* the wicked are to perish in the conflagration, he has to reproduce them, one way or other, to "compass the camp of the saints and the beloved city" at the end of the millennium (Rev. xx. 7–9), and to be consumed in their mad assault upon immortal men. "This," says he, "is a common difficulty to all (that is, all-premillennialists, for it is their system alone which creates the difficulty); and every one must contribute their best thoughts and conjectures towards the solution of it." The reader will smile at Burnet's own solution of it, if new to him.

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* Page 282. Also Appendix, No. II.

The editor of this reprint of Homes—Mr. Brooks—says, in a note to one part of the chapter from which we quote, that "in the Appendix it will be seen that he (Homes) is aware of the distinction between the saints of the resurrection and those who remain in the flesh."—(P. 286.) If, by "those who remain in the flesh," Mr. B. means "those *saints*," or *Christians*—which is the plain sense of his words—*it is not correct.*

† Theory of the Earth, book iv. ch. 7. Second edition, 1691.

Though Burnet refers here to the view of *Piscator* and others, who took the millennial reign of the risen saints to be in *heaven*, the reader will observe that what he characterizes as void of beauty and Scripture foundation, is simply *the distinction of two sorts of saints in the millennium.*

> "It seems probable," says he, "that there will be a double race of mankind in the future earth, very different from one another. . . . . . The one born from heaven, sons of God and of the resurrection, who are the true saints and heirs of the millennium: the others born of the earth, sons of the earth, *generated from the slime of the ground and heat of the sun*, as brute creatures were at first. This second progeny, or generation of men, in the future earth, I understand to be signified by the prophet under these borrowed or feigned names of Gog and Magog."*

Perry, early in the last century, thus emphatically expresses himself on the completion of the elect before the personal advent and reign on earth:—

> "It is certain that when Christ personally comes from heaven will be the time of the open solemnization of the marriage glory between Him and the Spouse; and, if so, then the bride must be ready against that time, as it is expressed in this text, 'And his Wife hath made herself ready;' which cannot be if they are not all converted before Christ comes. For this I think is undeniable, that by the 'Wife,' 'Bride,' or "Spouse' of Christ, the whole Elect must be understood. . . . . How can it be thought that Christ, when he comes from heaven to celebrate the marriage-feast between himself and his people, that he should have a lame and imperfect Bride; as she must be, if some should be with Christ in a perfect glorified state, and some of his mystical

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* Ch. 10.

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body at the same time in an imperfect and unglorified condition?"*

Perry, however, went further than this; not only denying the existence of *saints in the flesh* during the millennium, but even of *men at all in the flesh* during that period—the earth being, according to him, in exclusive possession of men in the resurrection-state during the millennium. A pleasant theory, truly; but how, according to it, did he get the last conflict after the millennium brought about (Rev. xx. 8, 9)? "This," says he, "seems to me to be the knottiest text throughout the whole Bible in relation to this glorious time." In his attempts to solve it, he first rejects the ordinary view—of the spiritual glory of the latter day terminating in an extensive outbreak of human corruption (that is not a glorious enough view of the millennium for those who hold the Personal Reign): Next, he rejects the now prevalent view among pre-millennialists, of two classes of saints—the one perfect, immortal, glorified, and reigning; the other unglorified, mortal, imperfect, and ruled over, having also mixed up with them a multitude of unconverted professors, who are at last to attack the rest and perish in the attempt. *Homes'* view he then rejects—of "some, not in the covenant of grace, preserved for the" pre-millennial "burning of the world, and restored unto an *Adamitical* state of innocence"—as a thing to him unintelligible.† He admits, indeed, that a remnant of the wicked may be preserved from the conflagration, who may "be left to multiply in some of the outside parts or borders of the earth," far enough from seeing or beholding the glory of Christ and the saints during the time of "that glorious reign," and renewed to no Adamitical state. But he gives a number of reasons against even this view, and ventures finally on one of his own, "which he knows is out of the common road of almost all expositors; and that is, that the Gog and Magog who will arise at the end of the thousand years, to compass the camp of the saints, will consist of *the number of all the wicked when raised out of their graves!*"—(P. 409.) He is aware that "this, by reason of its being altogether new, may seem strange, sound harsh, and appear altogether incredible unto many." But he "earnestly entreats the reader" to weigh his reasons for it, especially as he only humbly propounds it for the clearing of the darkest point in the pre-millennial scheme. His reasons are sensible and convincing, as against the other theories of his pre-millennial brethren; but in favour of his own view, I shall not trouble the reader with them.

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* The Glory of Christ's Visible Kingdom in this World. By JOSEPH PERRY, pp. 225, 226. Northampton, 1721.

† "By what means these will be cleansed, *if not in the covenant of grace*, from that original pollution which the whole posterity of Adam is polluted with, I am at a loss to know."—(P. 406.)

In a word, and coming down to our own day, Dr. M'Neile thus refers to those pre-millennialists whom he had found maintaining the completeness of the Church at Christ's coming:—

> "It is objected again, that the mystical body of Christ shall be completed at his second advent, and consequently admit of no increase, and that therefore the nations of the earth subsequent to that event cannot be brought into a Christian state;" for, "since they fall after the millennium, it is necessary to limit the nature of their blessedness during the millennium to an *Adamic* state—an Adamic state of innocent creature-ship," language uncouth enough certainly, but not more so than the thing it is intended to describe—"from which it is alleged they may fall, as our first parents fell."*

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* Lectures on the Prophecies relative to the Jewish Nation, pp. 185-189. First Edition, 1830.

The Adamic theory put forth a few years ago by Mr. Scott, cannot be

Lastly, A little work has just appeared by *Mr. Burchell*,* in which a theory is propounded identical with Perry's except in one particular. The conflagration, the creation of the new heavens and new earth, and the completion of the elect—are all to be pre-millennial: The new earth is to be in exclusive possession of the glorified saints, with their Head in the midst of them, and their millennial bliss undisturbed by the presence of *any other men* whatever.

"When the Lord God Omnipotent, the Son of man, is come in his glory, then all flesh comes to its end; the earth, with all that is therein, must be dissolved in fire. The work of the ministry has ceased; there are none to seek and save when the Lord has made up his jewels, and is making a full end of his enemies. The Lord Jesus Christ is coming to reign over the renewed earth, with his Church perfected and complete—with all who love his appearing, whether they have died in faith, or then remain alive. The thousand years is the Lord's great Sabbath-day, the glorious rest; when, having finished his gospel work, he will initiate his redeemed in the possession of bliss, and in the unclouded knowledge of an eternity to follow." As to *saints* living in the flesh after the Lord's coming, "I agree," says he, "in rejecting (I would say abhorring, if it were not that I fear to offend many good men) the mixed

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classed with those which admit the completeness of the Church at Christ's coming. According to him there will be *two* classes of righteous men in the flesh under the millennial reign of Christ and his glorified saints:—a race of *Christians*, "upheld from falling by union to Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit;" and a race of "*Adamitical* men"—as Perry would call them—"freed from all the effects of the fall," particularly "the corrupt nature and original sin," and "restored to the state of holiness and righteousness in which Adam was before the fall"—(*how*, we are left in the dark)—but who, "having merely Adam's state, and nothing more, will fall as Adam fell."—("Outlines of Prophecy," and "The Millennium of the Bible Vindicated." By James Scott, Preacher of the Gospel, 1844, 1845.)

* The Midnight Cry; or, the Coming of the Son of Man Considered. By the Rev. Joseph Burchell. 1849.

millennium, the half carnal, half spiritual glory drawn out by many." And as to *sinners*, "the idea," he says, "of a sinner surviving that day (of Christ's coming) would be absurd, if it were not worse than an absurdity."—(Pp. 3, 4, 50.)

But if neither saints nor sinners survive the coming of the Lord *before* the millennium, whence does he bring the apostate nations, who, at the close of that period, come up against the camp of the saints and the beloved city? Not *from the dead*, as Perry does. Yet here he feels the tenderness of his ground. "I well know," he says, "where the chief difficulty lies." His solution of it is certainly new. "The *nations*" (τα εθνη), "who, deceived by Satan, gather themselves together, as the sand of the sea, from the four quarters" or "corners (γωνιαις) of the earth," are *evil spirits*, "an invisible kingdom, headed by the Serpent, who, during the millennium, are bound at the angles or corners of the earth, at the four winds of heaven, the mysterious starting-point of spirits." (P. 20.) This new idea—of Satan's deceiving himself—I suppose I may leave without comment.*

The weight of these testimonies to the absolute completeness of the Church at Christ's coming, lies merely in *the quarter from which they come.* With any other than pre-millennialists, such statements as we have quoted would be a matter of course; for none but they have any doubt that Christ will stay in the heavens till all his redeemed be brought in. But when any of *them* admit this, we see at what a sacrifice it is done. It destroys at once the sobriety and credibility of their scheme. What it seems to gain at the *beginning*, and during the currency of the thousand years, it more than loses at the *end* of that period. Bright would be the hope they hold out, of " our gathering together unto Him" at his coming, and reign with him on the earth—none that are " *His*" left behind, but all " ever with the Lord"—were the prospect not overcast, and the vessel marred in the hands of the potter, by the introduction of a very different and discordant element at the end of one brief millennium of celestial bliss—even the rush of myriad hosts from all the ends of the earth against ——what ? against the very glory of the Lord, and the pavilion of his immortal and transfigured people ! It matters little which of the ways of explaining this be adopted—whether, with Homes and Burnet, the rebel multitude be thought to be *mortal men ;* or, with Perry, *the wicked raised from the dead ;* or, with Mr. Burchell, *evil spirits.* The absurdity of all ways of it is alike manifest. But those who concede to us that there will be *no earthly Church* after Christ comes, and yet insist on bringing him from heaven *before* the millennium, cannot help themselves. As their concession to us deprives them of all materials for bringing about the *final conflict*, they are driven into such extravagant ways of realizing it as only serve to show the hopeless impracticability of their scheme. They could avoid their difficulty by denying the completeness of the Church when Christ comes. But to this notion they have as much repugnance as we have ; and rather than fall in with what they regard as abhorrent and in the face of Scripture, they resort to solutions of their difficulty which all but themselves perceive to be extravagant and incredible. It is this then, which gives weight to their testimony to the completeness of the Church at the Lord's coming. It is the testimony of those who have every inducement (so to speak) to deny it—who feel themselves shut up to the admission, cost what it may, that when Christ comes—whether before the millennium or not—he will want none of his redeemed.

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* In this little book, however, of a beloved friend, its readers will easily discern the elegance, refinement, and spirituality which characterise the author. How beautiful, for example, is that reference to the song of the second Coming, as "*the antistrophe of the first Advent.*" (P. 15) Some fine views of Christ occur here and there; and though the tone is sometimes a little too *authoritative*, and not without a tincture of the *mystical* and the *morbid*, such spirituality as breathes through the whole is refreshing in these days of secularity.

The SECOND class of pre-millennialists consists of those who deny this—embracing nearly all who hold the Personal Reign in our day, and against whose system I chiefly write. According to them, when the apostle says, "*They that are Christ's* (shall be quickened) at his coming," he means not his whole mystical body—the universal family of the redeemed—but only such of them as shall *have lived up to the millennium.* On this extraordinary liberty I submit the following remarks:—

1. It is a violent, offensive, and perilous departure from the plain meaning of the words, not only here, but in all similar passages of Scripture, in which it is impossible to point out any thing, I say not which *demands*, but which even *admits* of a limitation in the sense.

2. This departure from the plain meaning of words comes strangely from the advocates of *literal* interpretation —who ascribe to this same vicious habit of departing from the literal and obvious sense of Scripture, nearly all the opposition which their doctrine meets with. Those who will allow no latitude in the interpretation of prophetic language—who insist on our taking predictions imbedded in symbol and figure with a literality reckless of consequences—are the very persons who take to themselves this prodigious latitude in the interpretation of the most unadorned statements that can be imagined. The intelligent reader, while he marks this inconsistency, will trace it to the necessities of the case and the difficulties of the system.

Once insert the pre-millennial *wedge* into the text of Scripture, and a loosening process will commence, the extent of which will depend upon the energy and determination with which it is driven in.

3. Strange to say, the very party who contend for the glorification of only a *fractional part* of Christ's people at his coming, seem at times to forget themselves, and fall in with our views. They cannot part, it seems, with the bright expectation of a perfect, public, and simultaneous glorification of the *whole* Church at the Saviour's second appearing; and they kindle into just ardour at the glorious prospect—as if their system did not cut it up by the roots. "O how glorious," exclaims sweet old *Durant*, already quoted, "will that salvation be, *when all the heirs of salvation shall meet together!* Now, all are not saved; the whole body now is in trouble for a part. *Then all the children of the Father shall meet together* in their Father's presence; they shall come from the east and west, from north and south, and sit down in that kingdom; yea, and then all saints shall be sweetly conjoined. Jewels scattered are not so resplendent; but joined in some rich pendent, O how glorious are they! In that day Christ will gather up all his jewels—he will *bring in every saint into one—gather them into one great jewel, one precious pendent, which shall jointly lie in his own bosom.* Now a saved soul sighs and cries, Where is Israel?—where is Judah? When will the Lord save them? Why, poor hearts, *you shall all meet at that day*—be saved with an *universal* salvation; and so be all of you with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the patriarchs, prophets—all the apostles and martyrs; yea, all that fear God, small as well as great. All, always, altogether in the presence of your Saviour!—surely, then, you will say, that salvation is very sweet. *Not one saint shall be missing in that day;* but *all shall altogether meet,*

and enjoy the salvation of Christ then, so *universal* shall it be."* Now these statements are very pleasant upon our principles. We can cordially respond to them, and take the full comfort of them. But what are we to make of them upon the pre-millennial doctrine—"All the heirs of salvation meeting together in their Father's presence," at the *beginning* of the thousand years—"not one saint missing in that day"?

But perhaps this is more the language of ardour than of accuracy, and of an age when the doctrine of the pre-millennial advent was not so well understood in its manifold bearings as it is now? Hear, then, *Mr. Bickersteth,*—hear him, not giving vent to his feelings in loose language, but calmly and didactically delivering what he takes to be the testimony of Scripture on this point. In his chapter on the "Period of the Second Coming," the following is the fifth of what he calls "The New Testament Statements bearing on this subject:" "ONE GLORIOUS HOPE IS SET BEFORE THE CHURCH, in the New Testament.† This hope is set before us collectively and in common. It is not to be given separately and at *different* periods; but it is a glory belonging to the Church, to be given to it as a corporate body, and at a *particular* period—the coming of our Lord; and while it is to be the one object of hope of all the Church in every age, it is to be enjoyed together as one body. For this all are to be looking."‡ Then follow a number of excellent proof-texts. Now, in this statement we perfectly and zealously concur; but the marvel is, how any man who holds the views which he does can put it down as a statement of his own belief. If the author will *unchurch* the myriads that are to people the earth during the thousand years—if he will tell us plainly, that the "men who shall then be *blessed in Christ*"—the "all nations who shall call him blessed"—will *not* be "blessed" with vital union to him and participation in the blessings of his salvation, we can understand him; for then he will just rank with our first class, whose views of the "Adamic state of innocent creatureship," in which the millennial nations are to rejoice, have at least the merit of consistency. In such case, he is at full liberty to speak of the glorification of the Church as being "given to it as a corporate body, and at a particular period—the coming of our Lord;" for the "corporate body" is then completed—"the Church," by his own hypothesis, "is then entire." But it will not do to take the benefit and the comfort of a simultaneous glorification of the whole Church at the commencement of the millennium, and then to expatiate on the glories of a millennial Church, *after that*, sojourning on earth for a thousand years. Your expectation of the Church's corporate glory at the coming of our Lord is beautiful and soul-stirring; but that expectation is *ours*, not *yours*. You have no right to it, but on one condition—that you unchristianize—that you sever from Christ and all his saving benefits—every one of the holy and happy myriads with whom you people and bless the earth during the thousand years. When you have done this, you will then be entitled to kindle at a prospect infinitely superior to even this happy state of things—the prospect of appearing in glory "as a corporate body, and at a particular period, even the coming of our Lord." But while you believe in the *Church-state* of the millennial nations—in the *Christian* character of the latter-day glory—you do but dazzle your readers with descriptions of a glory never to be realized on your principles; for it is a manifest abuse of language to say, that you expect the Church in its *entireness* to appear with Christ in glory at his coming.

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* Christ's Appearance the Second Time, *ut supra*, pp. 51-53. One would think from this extract, that Durant belonged to our *first* class; out as this is not clear, and some passages seem to look the other way I give it in the above connexion.

† The capitals and italics are the author's own.

‡ Practical Guide to the Prophecies. Fifth edition, p. 80.

Still, one may say, perhaps even Mr. Bickersteth does not here speak the sentiments of his friends. Does so glaring an inconsistency pervade the writings of pre-millennialists generally? Let the reader judge from the following passages, which I quote from the second volume of Church of England Lectures on the Advent.* The first lecture is on "The Manifestation of the Church at the coming of the Lord," from Eph. v. 25–27, "Christ loved the Church," &c., which the author† interprets quite as absolutely as we ourselves do. "What," says he, "is meant by the Church? It is composed of *all those who have been given to Christ by the Father from eternity.* It comprises *all those for whom, in an especial manner, Christ gave himself.*" On "the nature of the manifestation," he remarks, "1. The Church will be glorious in its *completeness.* Never before shall *the whole church* have been *seen together—then* he will have ACCOMPLISHED THE NUMBER OF HIS ELECT. That prayer will be answered which our Lord offered up just before he was crucified, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one,' &c.—NOT ONE OF THE LORD'S PEOPLE WILL BE WANTING"—and more to the same effect. He then comes to "the time when this shall take place;" on which, after adducing some very good texts, he says, "*These statements positively and distinctly mark the time of the manifestation of the Church to be at the coming of the Lord.*"—(Pp. 5, 7, 8, 12.)

The fifth lecture is on "the Lord's Supper as a pledge of the Lord's return"—a subject on which we shall have something to say by and by. The following sentences from this lecture are as destructive of the scheme they are brought to support as any thing we could say on the subject. "The Lord's Supper," says Mr. Brock,* "is a feast. And what a festival will that be when *all the sons of God are united at their father's table!* . . . Catholicity is another manner in which the Supper of the Lord becomes a pledge to believers of the econd advent. All the Church are made partakers of this ordinance. It is open to believers—to them only, and to each and all of them. Thus it is catholic to the Church, exclusive to the world. So will it be as to the future. There shall be an exclusion of all the wicked; an admission of *all the righteous.* They, they only, *and each and all of them*, shall be admitted to the Saviour's presence. Not one of them shall be wanting. Their names have been written in the Lamb's book of life, from the foundation of the world. Their place is prepared, and it cannot be vacant. They are members of his body, WITHOUT WHOM (*the least of them*) THAT BODY WOULD BE MAIMED AND INCOMPLETE. *All shall appear at the appointed time*, and each assist to make up the perfect symmetry and exact proportion of that catholic assembly."—Pp. 122, 126, 127.)

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* The Second Coming of Christ Practically Considered. Nisbet. 1844.

† Rev. E. Auriol, Rector of St. Dunstan's.

In the same strain, and with equal precision, speaks Mr. Grimshawe (the excellent editor of Cowper's Works), in the sixth Lecture, on "the joy of the faithful minister at Christ's coming." The third particular in which this joy will consist is (he says), "the gathering together in glory of all the ransomed Church of Christ—the perfect man—the completeness of Christ in all the members of his mystical body, elect, sanctified, and finally perfected in glory—the redeemed of every age, tongue, kindred, and people."—(Pp. 153, 154.)

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* Chaplain to the Bath Penitentiary.

One other quotation from the eighth Lecture, on "the hope of the advent, a remedy against superstition," will show the uniformity of strain, and the identity, almost, of expression, in which all these pre-millennialists speak of the simultaneous glorification of the entire Church at Christ's appearing. "This hope (of the advent, says Mr. Dibdin*) is the hope constantly set before the Church in the word of God. . . . . But what Church? . . . It is *all those who have been chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.* The Church? it is *every one of those who have been, are, or shall be born of the Spirit, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus. . . . . Till all whom the Father hath chosen in Christ* out of mankind *are born again and justified, the Church will not be complete.*" —(Pp. 194, 195.)

I make no apology for the number of these quotations; each from a different witness—all from one volume, and that a recent one—expressing, with a clearness and a copiousness not to be misunderstood, the fixed belief, and the ardent expectation of those who are now looking for the coming of Christ before the millennium. And what is it? It is, that the entire Church shall appear with Christ at his coming; or, to take their own excellent definitions of the Church, that "all those who have been given to Christ by the Father from eternity—all those for whom, in an especial manner, Christ gave himself—all who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb—every one of those who have been, are, and shall be born of the Spirit, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus"—in a word, "the completeness of Christ in all the members of his mystical body, elect, sanctified, and finally perfected in glory"—all, all shall appear with Christ at his coming.

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* Minister of West Street Episcopal Chapel, St. Giles, London.

" Scripture positively and distinctly marks the time of the manifestation of the Church," thus defined, " to be," they tell us, " at the coming of the Lord."

Well, agreeing with you cordially in all this, my simple question is, What will the Jews and Gentiles be, with whom you people the world during the millennium, and *over whom* you make the glorified Church to reign with Christ? They cannot belong to the elected, the blood-bought, the regenerated, and justified members of Christ's mystical body; for you have taken all these away from the earth, and out of their fleshly condition, to appear with Christ in glory *before* the millennium. If your statements are not hopelessly unintelligible, there will not be found, from beginning to end of the thousand years, one of the elect, the redeemed, the regenerate, one believer, one saint upon earth. Whatever may constitute the felicity of that period, it will not be Christianity—it will not be saintship. Christ's coming has put an end, by your own showing, to the existence of this upon earth and in the flesh.

Will you fall back, then, upon the *Adamic* theory? You ought to do it. But you will not. On opening your books again, we find you making the millennium the same *Christian* state that *we* expect it to be. The Jews, you say, looking on their pierced *Saviour*, will *repent* and *believe*, and be the missionary instruments of the Gentiles' *conversion;* and you speak of the *spiritual* blessedness of that period when " the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"—when " the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High"—when " men shall be *blessed in Christ* (with salvation, of course) and all nations shall call him blessed."*

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* See among others, Bickersteth's *Guide, passim.*

Here, then, is the inextricable difficulty into which your system shuts you up; and yet you are either unaware of it, or will not face it. You expatiate with equal confidence upon two things, the one of which is destructive of the other. You rejoice that Christ will bring *all* his people with him, *before* the millennium. You no less rejoice in the prospect of a world peopled with believing men for a thousand years *after* his coming! Let the reader now judge with what clearness pre-millennialists perceive the bearings of their own doctrine, and whether the parts of that doctrine are capable of hanging together as one consistent whole.

We have thus seen that Christ, at his second appearing, will come *absolutely and numerically* "with all his saints" —"them that are His;" and have seen how remarkably this is confirmed by the enthusiastic, though suicidal testimony of both classes of pre-millennialists. The first class, building their scheme upon the *admission* of this great truth, are thereby driven, as we have seen, into extravagances which it was unnecessary to refute, because they vanish at the touch. The second class, basing their scheme upon the *denial* of this truth, seem unable to want its inspiration; for thus only can I account for the strain in which they anticipate a prospect which their system repudiates. Does not this show, where the weakness of the pre-millennial theory lies—obliging us either to deny the great Scriptural doctrine of the completeness of the Church at Christ's coming, or to believe in a millennium without Christians? And I venture to affirm, that from this dilemma there is no possible escape, but in the belief which clears all up—that *Christ's second coming will not be pre-millennial*, that all the glory of the latter day—whether it be a definite or an indefinite period—together with the final efforts of the wicked, at the close of it, will PRECEDE, *and not* SUCCEED *the coming of Christ.*

SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS.

The preceding argument, as it appeared in the first edition of this work, has drawn forth a number of replies, particularly from Mr. Bickersteth, the Duke of Manchester, and Mr. A. Bonar; answers which, in my judgment, expose the weakness of the pre-millennial system, and the looseness of Scripture interpretation which it necessitates, more effectually than most of the arguments employed to refute it. They all distinguish between "the *Bride* of the Lamb," and the whole number of the *saved;* affirming that the one will be complete at his coming, but the other not. Each, however, has his own way of reconciling his readers to this conclusion.

Mr. Bickersteth explains, that by "the Church," which is to appear as a complete and corporate body with Christ at his coming, he meant, not all the saved, but only *a peculiar portion* of them, called 'the bride, the assembly of the first-born, the kings and priests unto God, the city;' "whose privilege is distinct and peculiar—not holiness and blessedness *merely*, but these in a peculiar form." And who are to constitute this peculiar portion of the saved? *All who have believed up to the commencement of the millennium.* These alone are *the mystical body of Christ.* But after they are completed, at the second advent the earth will be peopled by "nations of the saved" in flesh and blood—friends, companions, servants of the Bridegroom—a totally different party from the then glorified *Bride.* But in what respect different? The answer is, that though they have "holiness and blessedness," they have "*merely*" that—they have it not in "the peculiar form" of union to Christ as his mystical body or bride. If one should ask again, what *other* union there is of sinners to Christ, but as " members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (Eph. v. 30), the answer we get is a little startling :—

" There may be (says Mr. Bickersteth), *and doubtless are*, A THOUSAND STAGES AND VARIETIES OF UNION WITH CHRIST, DISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST-BORN."

After this, we need not of course wonder to find the *Adamic* variety among the multitudinous types of millennial humanity—the curious *Mosaic* which is to adorn the new earth. Accordingly, Mr. Bickersteth thus proceeds :—

" In the first place, an Adamic state of innocence is not, as is unguardedly said (he refers to Dr. M'Neile), infinitely inferior to Christian union with God ; for it is a real union and like that of unfallen angels in kind, though a little lower in form." " In every human household (he afterwards says) there are usually four parties—the *bridegroom* and *bride*, *friends* and *servants*."*

The Duke of Manchester limits the mystical body of Christ still farther—excluding from it not only all the saints who are to live after the *second* advent, but also all who lived before the *first* advent, or rather *prior to the ascension of Christ.*

" The gifts (he says) necessary for forming the Christ mystical were not conferred until after the ascension of Jesus. . . . . . We could not, therefore, say with propriety that the Church under former dispensations was ' Christ.' The Bride is the New Jerusalem. . . . . . Now the great glory of the New Jerusalem is, that it is the abode of Deity. But for the believer to be a habitation of God, is the peculiar glory of the dispensation founded by the apostles, according to the promise, 'He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.'"

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* The Divine Warning to the Church at this Time. Fourth Edition 1846. It is from Part IV., Ch. III., " Answers to some objections," which is in reply to myself, that I quote, pp. 310, &c.

In what state his Grace expects the Old Testament saints to be, when they rise from the dead to inherit Canaan during the millennium, as he expects them to do—I scarcely know. Probably he distinguishes between *mere* resurrection and glorification, and that *inhabitation of Deity* which he makes the distinguishing privilege of believers under this dispensation.*

Mr. Bonar differs materially from both these authors According to him, the millennial saints, will be saints in the same sense as all other saints, whether under this dispensation or before it. The only difference will be in their *external circumstances.* Having none of the *trials* of preceding saints, they will not attain to the dignity, reserved exclusively for tried Christians, of being the *Bride* of Christ.

" All saints (says he) redeemed amid toil and temptation, and sorrow and warfare, shall form the *Bride* at the Lord's coming ; and this Bride shall reign with him a thousand years. Then, as to the saints who shall people earth during these thousand years, they are as really saints, and as simply dependent on this Head, as any of those already in glory. As to state, character, and modes of spiritual life, they are not saints of another stamp from those of the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Gentile days ; but, on the contrary, they are converted as they were, live by faith as they did, war with their own corruptions as they, and hang on Christ alone to the last. It is only their *circumstances* that are different from former saints. They live during these millennial days with scarcely any, or rather with no opposition at all ; without persecution, and without Satan's temptations, for he is bound. It seems good, therefore, to the sovereign God to make a difference between them and those that lived not in millennial days. . . . . . The children of the millennium shall be *our* children." . . . But "children are not different in nature from the parents. We wholly reject all theories about an Adamic race, or any thing similar; we maintain that the children of that age shall be found in the miry clay by the sovereign God; converted by his Holy Spirit; led to see sin and the Saviour, as we do; sanctified, probably far more rapidly and thoroughly, yet still by the same Spirit, through the Word, and so prepared for a future eternity." *

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* The Finished Mystery. Appendix : " Examination of Mr. Brown's Work on the Second Advent," pp. 284–288.

What fantastic and bewildering speculations are these! How opposed to the general strain of Scripture; how destitute even of the semblance of support; how alien from any thing that would occur to an ordinary reader of the Bible; how contrary to the belief of all churches, and the judgment of all commentators, from the beginning; and, as now put forward by the advocates of the pre-millennial theory, how manifestly are they suggested by the necessities of a system! A few sentences on each of the three forms in which this alleged distinction between "*the Bride*" and the whole number of *the saved* is exhibited, in the extracts which I have given, will suffice to justify these reflections.

1. As the Duke of Manchester is aware that he stands almost alone among his brethren, in excluding all who lived before the ascension of Christ from the privileges of "the Bride," "the New Jerusalem," "Christ" mystical, "the body of Christ," I shall merely say of his scheme, that it is founded on most untenable and dangerous views of the difference between the Old and the New Testament dispensations. *Where* the real difference lies is one

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* Redemption, &c., pp. 124, &c.

of the oldest questions in the Christian Church; but while orthodox men have slightly differed in their mode of conceiving the characteristics of the two economies, they have ever entertained a common jealousy against those low views of the Old Testament dispensation which would go to strip it of all *spiritual vitality*, or make *salvation* possible by merely *external* operations of the Spirit. In these low views, when fully carried out, a Manichean tincture was early detected; they were opposed as heretical; their defenders all along have been, for the most part, men otherwise unsound: and although there have been from time to time divines, sound in the main, who—either not perceiving the full effect of their own statements, or not taking sufficiently *inward* and *ethical* conceptions of certain truths, or from kindred causes—have approached too closely to the views of those with whom, in other things, they have no sympathy, we cannot consent, in deference to them, to give up the *essential oneness of the Church and people of God* under both dispensations, or admit any such difference between them as to require, or even to tolerate, the exclusion of all the Old Testament saints from the glory which is prepared for those of our dispensation.* Why, instead of a question whether *they* are to share with *us*, the whole strain of the New Testament language goes merely to show that *we* shall not be excluded from sharing with *them*—that we shall come from the east and from the west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (not they with us) in the kingdom of God.—(Matt. viii. 11.) True, "They *without* us could not be made perfect" (Heb. xi. 40)—that is, without *Christ* and the *Spirit*, whose proper economy ours certainly is; but as this manifestly implies that *with* us they have all the perfection which we have—that with Christ to save and the Spirit to sanctify them, which they got anticipatively from *our* dispensation, they are in all respects on a par with us—there is not a shadow of ground for excluding the Old Testament saints from the glory prepared for those of our dispensation.*

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* His Grace refers to *Archdeacon Hare* in support of his distinction, who quotes a long passage from *Olshausen*, concluding with this statement that as "the special work of the Holy Ghost is regeneration," therefore "regeneration belongs essentially to the New Testament, because under this dispensation the Holy Ghost first manifested his specific power."—(*Mission of the Comforter*, ii. 492.) Whether the Archdeacon meant to extend his approval of the extract thus far (in the face of John iii. 6, 7, 10, &c.), is doubtful, from what follows. But, be this as it may, I am not disposed, in a point of this nature, to consider either Hare or his author unexceptionable expositors of the general mind of the Church —much as I admire the freshness, the power, the learning, and the versatility of the one, and highly as I value the subtle, penetrating, and spiritual, though very *German*, mind of the other.

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* Istud—says CALVIN, who, on the Christology of the Old Testament, occupied what many would term low ground—quoque scitissime eodem loco subjungit (Augustinus), pertinere ab initio mundi ad Novum Testamentum filios promissionis, regeneratos a Deo, qui fide per dilectionem operante obedierunt mandatis. Idque in spe non carnalium, terrenorum, temporalium, sed spiritualium, cœlestium, æternorum bonorum, præcipue credentes in Mediatorem: per quem non dubitârunt et Spiritum sibi administrari, ut benefacerent, et ignosci, quoties peccarent. Id enim ipsum est quod asserere in animo fuit, ejusdem nobiscum benedictionis in æternam salutem consortes fuisse omnes sanctos, quos ab exordio mundi peculiariter a Deo selectos Scriptura commemorat. . . . . Atque hic quoque de sanctis Patribus annotandum est, ita sub Veteri Testamento vixisse, ut non illic restiterint, sed aspirarint semper ad Novum, adeoque certam ejus communionem amplexi sint.—*Instit. Christ. Relig.* Lib. ii. cap. xi. 10.

Nos omnes de plenitudine ejus accepimus. Quid—exclaims AUGUSTIN—est, *Nos omnes?* Ergo Patriarchæ, et Prophetæ et Apostoli Sancti, vel ante incarnationem præmissi vel ab Incarnato missi, *omnes nos de plenitudine ejus accepimus.* Nos vasa sumus, Ille fons est.—*Serm.* cclxxxix. 5. Ipsum (Christum) martyres in manifesto confessi sunt, quem tunc Machabæi confessi sunt,* mortui sunt isti pro Christo in evangelio revelato; mortui sunt illi pro Christi nomine in lege velato. Christus habet utrosque, Christus pugnantes adjuvit utrosque, Christus coronavit utrosque.—*Serm.* ccc. 5.

* This Sermon was delivered at the festival of the Maccabean martyrs.

2. Mr. Bickersteth's "thousand stages and varieties of union with Christ"—for poor sinners of mankind—defy comment. Happily, however, they do not need it. The only wonder is, that speculations so out of the line of all that is sober, on such a subject as union to Christ, and language which even the author himself would find it hard to explain, should be hazarded by one so distinguished for the meekness and gentleness of Christ. The reader, however, when he comes to our chapter on the "Resurrection," will find this esteemed minister laying down positions quite as startling and repulsive as this. And when he finds that even these novel and unsavoury speculations are advocated, as clearly revealed truths of Scripture, by one of the acutest and most forcible writers on that side—*Mr. Birks*—and by a writer of considerable power and some reading on the other side of the Atlantic—*Mr. Lord;* when, moreover, he considers how difficult it is for those who would work out the pre-millennial scheme to avoid being driven into conclusions of this nature, he will see afresh what a *wedge* this system is, upheaving, when introduced into the text of Scripture, almost every thing which has hitherto been regarded as most fixed and sacred—all that has been "most surely believed among us."

Before passing from Mr. Bickersteth here, I will give one brief illustration of the extreme slenderness of the ground on which he rests the weightiest conclusions. "In every human household (he says) or marriage, there are usually four parties—the bridegroom, the bride, friends, and servants;" and if we do not admit as many "*varieties*" at least of "union with Christ," we are charged with "not only crossing many express statements, but every lesson of analogy." Now, let us see what conclusions this will bring out of a single passage of Scripture: "He that hath the

Bride," said the Baptist, "is the Bridegroom; but the *Friend of the Bridegroom*, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice; this my joy, therefore, is fulfilled."—(John iii. 29.)* According to Mr. Bickersteth's way of viewing such language, the poor Baptist will not be of "the Bride" at all. Though "the first resurrection," and the millennial glory of the risen saints, is said to be specially designed for *suffering* believers, this rare example of fidelity, humility, love to the Saviour, and self-sacrifice, will not be found in that class at all, but be seen on the lower platform appropriated to the "*friends*" of the Bridegroom! At this rate the wise virgins who went forth to meet the Bridegroom in the parable (Matt. xxv.), represent not those who are to be "the Bride" at his coming, but those who merely *attend* the nuptials as "friends;" and those who are invited to the marriage-supper (Matt. xxii.), though clothed with the wedding-garment, are, on this principle, to be held as representing a distinct class altogether from those called "the Bride." I cannot persuade myself that the author would accept these conclusions. But why not? and where shall we be if we are thus to explain the figures of Scripture? Who does not see that the Baptist called himself "the friend of the Bridegroom," not to express his *personal*, but his *official* standing in relation to Christ? and that the same *believers* are termed "*the virgins*," in respect of their call to be ready for Christ's coming—*the* "*guests*" at the marriage-supper, in respect of the fellowship they hold with him—and "*the bride*," in respect of their intimate and endearing union to him. In vain, then, are endless "varieties of union with Christ" drawn out of such figurative language, and wonderful it is, that from premises so very slender such mighty conclusions should, by any sober writer, be drawn.

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* The Jews thought to kindle in the Baptist a jealousy of his Master—as one who was requiting the generous testimony he had borne to him by drawing all his disciples away to himself. The reply of that blessed servant and martyr of Jesus, in the words above quoted, I have always thought to be one of the most glorious and affecting of human utterances, and perhaps beyond all the testimonies that ever were borne to Christ. 'The Bride is not mine—why should the people stay with me? Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ: mine it is to point the guilty to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world—to tell them There is Balm in Gilead, and a Physician there; and shall I grudge to see them, in obedience to the call, flying as a cloud, and as doves to their windows? Whose is the Bride, but the Bridegroom's? Enough for me to be the Bridegroom's *friend*—sent by him to negotiate the match—privileged, as an humble instrument, to bring together the Saviour and the souls he is come to seek and to save, and rejoicing with joy unspeakable to stand by and witness the blessed espousals. Say you, then, they go from me to Him? You bring me glad tidings of great joy; for He must increase, but I must decrease: This my joy, therefore, is fulfilled!'

3. Mr. Bonar's theory of the distinction between the *Bride* and the whole number of the *saved*, has not certainly the repulsive appearance of the other theories we have been noticing. He admits that the Christians who are to people the earth after Christ has descended to it with his *completed* Bride, will, like ourselves, "be found in the miry clay by the sovereign God, be converted by his Holy Spirit, led to see sin and the Saviour—[Why does he not add, *united to Him* by faith, *as we are?*]—sanctified probably far more rapidly and thoroughly, yet still by the same Spirit, through the word, and so prepared for a future eternity." It is something to get footing like this—to get a Christianity that one can understand—for the millennium. Nor will I disturb it by asking, just now, how this Christianity is to be produced in sinful men, with Christ in glory before their eyes, and "the righteous shining forth as the sun" in their very presence. Waiving this for the present—the following very obvious remarks are enough to show that the

theory which Mr. Bonar propounds is without any solid foundation, and is opposed to the whole current of Scripture.

(1.) When Christ's people are termed his "Bride," his "Spouse"—when they are said to be "espoused" and "married" to him—in a word, when *conjugal* relations, intercourse, and affections are employed to set forth what subsists between Him and them,—who, until now, ever doubted that *a union common to all believers* is intended? And on what principle can it be maintained that the term "*Bride*" is meant to point, not to that *internal*, *vital union* to Christ which is common to all who shall ever believe in him, but to *special privileges* peculiar to one class of them?

(2.) As the *union* of all believers to Christ is the same as to its essence, so the future *glory* of them all alike is represented as *flowing from that union*, and not from any *external circumstances* in which they may differ from each other. Is it necessary to give proofs of what is so manifest?

> "Thou hast given thy Son power over all flesh," said Jesus to his Father, "that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory," &c.—(John xvii. 2–24.)

Here, all the elect get eternal life from Christ's hands—will any that ever shall believe in him get *less?* But here, also, Christ wills that the same elect company be with him where he is, to behold his glory—and can any class of believers have *more?*

> "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise

> him up at the last day. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."—(John vi. 39, 44, 54, 56.)

Who that reads these words can doubt that the elect—drawn to Christ by common supernatural grace, one with Him in common, by mutual inhabitation through the Spirit, and thus saved with a "common salvation" (Jude 3), are destined to partake in common of the resurrection, life, and glory of their Head? "*The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.*"—(John xvii. 22.)

> "Whom he did foreknow," says Paul, "he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren, [in *resurrection* and *glory* surely, as well as every thing else.] Moreover whom he did predestinate [the whole company of the elect], them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also *glorified.* If any man [during the millennium surely, as well as at any other time] have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—(Rom. viii. 29, 30; 9, 11.)

But why go on? Who can read the New Testament, and fail to see that all the life, and glory, and fellowship with the Lamb, which any believers shall ever have, is made to flow from the common oneness of all believers with Christ, as Head of his body the Church, and not from the mere "external circumstances" which may distinguish one class of them from another?

Not only is there no ground for any such distinction, but the passages which, by a palpable misconception of them, are adduced in support of it, prove just the reverse. For example :—

> "*If so be that we suffer with him*, that we may be also glorified together."—(Rom. viii. 17.)
>
> "*If we suffer*, we shall also reign with him."—(2 Tim. ii. 12.)

Who does not see that in these passages it is not *suffering* as opposed to *unsuffering* Christians, but *true* Christians as opposed to *false*, that are here described ? In the one passage, we have but to read the whole verse to see this at once :—

> "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

Shall we say that the latter clause of this verse is intended to *limit* the former ? and that the apostle's meaning is, that not *all* the children of God are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, but *only such of them as suffer* with him ? As well might we say that in the first verse of this chapter, when the apostle says—

> "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit,"

he means that not *all* that are in Christ Jesus are freed from condemnation, but only such of them as walk in the Spirit.* The other passage shows this even more clearly, when, instead of only the one-half, we read the whole of it :

> "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him ; *if we deny* him, he also will deny us."

Here are not two kinds of Christians—suffering and unsuffering Christians—both genuine ; but true Christianity distinguished from false, by "fellowship in Christ's sufferings, and conformity to his death," as the indispensable prelude to participation in his glory and reign.

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* The second clause of both verses is what the critics call *epexegetical*, and not *restrictive*, of the former—designed to *characterise* the persons mentioned in the first clause.

Alas for the system which would set up a Christianity for the millennium, shorn of this essential characteristic, —which would represent it as the same thing in its essence with the Christianity now existing, and that is depicted in the New Testament, yet stripped of what the apostle holds up as part and parcel of it! If these millennial Christians are to bask in such inward and outward sunshine, as to be strangers to "SUFFERING WITH CHRIST," call them not Christians in our—or rather in the New Testament—sense of the term; but if "suffering with Christ" is to be common to them with us, notwithstanding the propitious circumstances by which they will be surrounded—why are they not to be "GLORIFIED TOGETHER," with their living Head, according to the indissoluble connexion which the matchless wisdom of the mediatorial system has established? It is impossible to answer these questions, or evade the alternatives which they offer. Once more,

3. Let the vastness of the *separation* in *eternal destiny*, which this theory makes between those Christians whom they style "The Bride," and the rest of the saved, be observed, and its amazing unscripturalness, and purely fanciful character, will strike at once the thoughtful mind.

> "This elect body (says Mr. Bonar) of believers *before* the millennium is the *Bride*, and shall be complete at the Lord's coming. *Not one other shall be added to this body after the Lord's coming —not one.*"—(P. 123.)

He does not say that those living *after* this shall join the Bride, and merge into that blessed company, when the thousand years are over—he does not say that their accession to this body shall be merely *postponed* till the everlasting state arrive. He knows well that he has not a ray of

Scripture for such an expectation—every text relating to the resurrection and glorification of believers *at all* being applied by him, and those who held his system, to a resurrection *before* the millennium. For aught that Scripture says, therefore—on his way of explaining it—those believers who are to people the earth after the second advent must remain *for ever* apart from that " Bride that shall be *complete* at the Lord's coming—to which not one shall be added after his coming—not one." What though there be myriads of men during the millennium, snatched by sovereign grace out of the miry clay, and "prepared" by the Word and Spirit of Jesus "*for a future eternity?*" Over that future eternity a dark veil is drawn; for his system has *no Scripture* for bringing them *ever* out of the fleshly and imperfect state which it assigns to them upon earth during the millennium.*

Now this seems to me quite as irrational as the other theories I have noticed. The objection to *them* was, that it made saintship, for sinners of mankind, *a different thing* under the *Old* and the *New* Testament—a different thing *before* the millennium and *after* it. The objection to this theory is, that while it makes saintship in every age *the same thing*, it makes the everlasting condition and issues of that saintship a vastly different thing in two classes of believers—those living *before*, and those living *during*, the millennium; and to ground this upon a mere difference in their "external circumstances"—what is it but to confound what is *essential* with what is *accidental*—as if the glorious oneness of the whole body of believers with Christ, in his death and resurrection, in his humiliation and glory, had less virtue to *bring them all together* with their adorable Head, to grace his second appearing—than the adventitious diversity of their outward circumstances to *separate them* from each other at that bright, transporting day?

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* Perhaps it will be said, What if this should be but one example of the *different degrees of glory* which all believe there will be in the future state among the people of God? The answer is obvious. This is confounding differences of *degree* with those of *kind*. Degrees in glory have always been understood to mean simply higher and lower *measures* of *one and the same state of glory*. But it is an abuse of language—in its universally understood sense—to apply such phraseology to the mighty distinction which Mr. Bickersteth's theory makes between "the completed bride" associated with Christ in his glory and reign, and those left unglorified on the earth, in a state of abiding subjection to the more favoured portion.

But what, after all, are those "*external circumstances*" on which such vast stress is laid, as distinguishing the Christians of the millennium from all other Christians? "They live," says Mr. Bonar, "during these millennial days, with scarcely any, or rather with no external opposition at all; without persecution, and without Satan's temptations, for he is bound." Are "external opposition and persecution," then, so bound up with Christianity as it now exists, that it cannot be real without them—that a Christian, whose outward lot is uniformly tranquil and unruffled, though it may be a *millennial* phenomenon, is one hitherto unheard of—that there can be no living by faith *now*, no walking in the narrow way, no crucifying of the flesh and living in the spirit, no occupying till Christ come—nothing, in short, of living connexion with Christ now, that shall give assurance of appearing with him in glory, unless "outward opposition and persecution" be superadded? Are not battles inly fought, and unseen victories won, in the sphere of the hidden life, which, in that Eye that looketh not upon the outward appearance but upon the heart, are brighter manifestations of the grace that bringeth salvation than many a martyrdom?

"Nor think who to that bliss aspire,
Must win their way through blood and fire;
The writhings of a wounded heart
Are fiercer than a foeman's dart."*

If this be granted, even in one case, the ground of distinction, as far as that goes, is given up. This is so manifest, that *Mr. Burgh*, who takes the same view of *outward* suffering as indispensable to participation in the "first resurrection," perceiving that this will necessarily exclude many true Christians from the millennial reign, limits it expressly to those whom he regards as *suffering* Christians. And this is the only consistent way of holding the theory.†

Mr. Bonar, indeed, mentions another ground of distinction—the freedom of millennial Christians "from Satan's temptations, for he is bound." In a subsequent part of this work, I believe I shall be able to show that this expectation is totally unscriptural—founded on a misapprehension of one single symbolical prediction, contradicted by the uniform tenor of Scripture, and at variance with the whole analogy of faith. But admitting for the present the total absence of Satanic agency during the millennium—if it be allowed, as it seems to be, that the natural heart will be the same then as now, that the grace of God will find men in the same "mire," and be as illustrious in plucking any out of it, that there will be the same war with inward corruption in every Christian, the same inability to do the things that they would, and the same need to "hang upon Christ alone to the last," as there is now—what mighty difference between them and us can even the absence of

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* *Christian Year.*

† *Lect. on Revelation*, and *Lect. on Second Advent.* In the latter work, Mr. Burgh is pleased to cut off from this class those who deny the premillennial advent! Nor is he altogether alone in this.

Satan make—what, at least, that should sever those from us in glory who share with us in our deepest struggles?

Thus—survey it in what light we will, and on whatever hypothesis may be framed to account for it—the distinction between *one portion* of the elect, ransomed, sanctified, and saved Church, as being exclusively "the Bride of the Lamb," to be associated with him in his glory, and *another portion* of the same Church, who are not to rise and reign with Him when he comes—is utterly foreign to the Bible and fanciful in its character, unknown to the faith of the Church, and suggested only by the necessities of a system. A tedious and ungenial work it has been to pursue into the *shallows* such poor, unfruitful distinctions as have engaged our attention in these supplementary remarks. Gladly, therefore, do we now come back to "a place of broad rivers and streams," to repose on the clear bosom of such words as these:—"Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me [all the elect] be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thon hast given me;" "This is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day;" "He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe;" "Our gathering together unto Him;" "They that are Christ's at his coming!"

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"[*]

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[*] Since writing these supplementary remarks, it has occurred to me that some notice should have been taken of those words on which many build their distinction between the bride and the rest of the saved:

> Rev. xxi. 24: "And the nations [of them which are saved [*]] shall walk in the light of it (the New Jerusalem), and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it."

It is surprising, however, that anything should be made of such a pas-

[*] The words enclosed in brackets (των σωζομενων) are excluded from the text by all critical editors—by *Bengel*, *Wetstein*, *Griesbach*, *Scholz*, *Lachmann*, *Tischendorf*, and *Tregelles*—as wanting in MS authority.

sage. For, as "the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour INTO the New Jerusalem," the state of both must be the same—the receptacle and the things received into it must be homogeneous. If "the kings of the earth" mean potentates living in the flesh, and their "glory and honour" mean their regal wealth and influence, then "the New Jerusalem" *into* which they enter, bringing this with them, *must* mean an earthly state of the Church. If, on the other hand, the "New Jerusalem" mean the glorified state of the Church, then "the kings" who bring their glory and honour *into* it, *cannot* mean the sovereigns of the earth living in the flesh, nor can their "glory and honour" mean any thing *earthly;* unless "flesh and blood can inherit the kingdom of God, and corruption inherit incorruption." Accordingly, though commentators are divided as to whether the two last chapters of Revelation denote the *heavenly state*, or a bright state of the Church *upon earth*, they agree in applying the whole verse before us to the *one* or the *other* of these states, but not to *both*. Thus *Vitringa* and others apply it to the Church on *earth*,[*] despite the "impudence" which *Augustin* thought it would require to venture on such a view:[†] while *Durham*, *Marck*, and the majority of commentators, on the other hand, apply it to the Church in glory, under the idea of a confluence of all that can be conceived of regal magnificence and grandeur to adorn that blessed state.[‡]

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[*] Post longa tempora persecutionum, afflictionum, et calamitatum. . . . . . magno numero implerent *novam* hanc *Civitatem Populi Dei*, et ad eam constituendam et exornandam undique confluerent; tum quoque Principes, Reges, Imperatores, Christo et Ecclesiæ ejus servaturi, suam gloriam, majestatem, vires, in eam inferrent; hoc est, in ejus converterent usum utilitatemque: &c.—*Anakris. Apocalyps.* ad loc.

[†] Nam hoc de isto tempore accipere quo regnat [ecclesia] cum Rege suo mille annis impudentiæ nimiæ mihi videtur. *De. Civ. Dei.*, Lib. xx. cap. xvii.

[‡] Magis placet, quod est apud *Durhamum*, tantam fore civitatis hujus gloriam, ut præ illa reges omnes regnorum gloriam deserant; vel quasi omnes reges omnem suam conferrent, ut locum suum gloriosum redderent, sic ut phrasis hæc ad externi emblematis decus spectet MARCKII *in Apoc. Comm.* ad loc.

CHAPTER V.

ALL THE MEANS OF GRACE, AND AGENCIES OF SALVATION, TERMINATE AT THE SECOND ADVENT.

We have seen that the whole elect and ransomed Church is complete when Christ comes. If this be correct, we may expect to find the ordained *means* for the gathering and perfecting of the Church disappearing from the stage—the standing *agencies* and *instrumentalities*—the whole economy and machinery of a visible Church-state—taken out of the way. Here then is a test—the fairest and most satisfactory that can be imagined—by which to try the truth of our doctrine. Pre-millennialists maintain that the saving of souls is to go on upon earth after the Redeemer's second appearing. If this be true, we shall find the means of grace surviving the advent. Whereas, if grace has ceased at Christ's coming to flow from the fountain, we shall find that the channels for its conveyance have disappeared too—if the building of mercy has been completed, we may expect to find the scaffolding cleared away.

Beginning then with the *Means*—If it can be shown that both the written Word and the sealing ordinances by which God ordinarily gathers and perfects the Church—*having their whole ends and objects exhausted at Christ's coming*—shall then absolutely cease as means of grace and salvation to mankind, I think it will be clear that all saving of souls is then at an end.

What, then, is the testimony of Scripture on this subject? The answer to this question forms

PROPOSITION SECOND:

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING WILL EXHAUST THE OBJECT OF THE SCRIPTURES.

His coming is the goal of all revelation, its furthest horizon, its last *terminus*, its Sabbath and haven. Thither are directed all the anxieties which divine truth awakens. Every hope which it kindles and every fear which it excites instinctively points to that awful event, its concomitants, and its issues, as the needle to the pole. To prepare men for it, as an event *future to all whom it addresses*, is what the Bible proposes, and positively all that it undertakes and is fitted to do. The whole force of every reference to Christ's coming in Scripture, as a motive to action, absolutely depends on its being a future event.

1. Look—in the case of *saints*—at all the incentives to patience and hope, to watchfulness and fidelity, to promptitude and cheerfulness in the discharge of duty, drawn from the prospect of Christ's coming, and see if they would not be stript of all their power and all their point, on the supposition of its being a *past* event, and as addressed to saints living after it. Take an example or two almost at random:—

> "Occupy TILL *I come.*"—(Luke xix. 13.)
>
> "Ye do well to take heed to the sure word of prophecy, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, UNTIL *the day dawn, and the day star arise in our hearts.*"—(2 Pet. i. 19.)
>
> "Be patient therefore, brethren, UNTO the coming of the Lord."—(James v. 7.)
>
> "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end

for the grace that is to be brought unto you AT the revelation of Jesus Christ."—(1 Pet. i. 13.)

"The Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give the crown of righteousness at that day to *all* them that *love his appearing*."—(2 Tim. iv. 8.)

"Our conversation is in heaven, from whence *we look for* the Saviour."—(Phil. iii. 20.)

It is impossible to deny that the attitude of *expectancy* and preparedness for a *future* appearing of Christ, is the whole burden of one and all of these passages. Just think how they would sound in the ears of saints living *after* the advent. "Behold I come quickly"—is the exhilarating announcement of Jesus to those whose eyes long to behold him—"and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." But from what lips shall that delightful response go forth *after* his coming, "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus?" The Church's hopes and fears and struggles have found their object and end. *Beyond that end we never get* in God's Word. It is the goal of all souls travelling from nature to grace, from a lost to a saved state. It is the crisis and consummation of the state of grace, and the whole Bible is *constructed upon the principle of its being so.*

And here, let us recal the scriptural connexion which we found to subsist between the two comings of Christ; how to the *grace* brought by the one we look backward by faith, and forward by hope to the *glory* which is to be brought by the other; how. between these two events, of unutterable importance to the formation and growth of the Christian character, the believer is thus poised: let this intrinsic connexion and studied juxtaposition of these two doctrines in the Christian system—these commanding events in the work of redemption—be duly weighed, and then let the reader say, whether the theory of a race of *outstanding* saints, *living on earth after the second advent*, does not dislocate this connexion, eviscerate every text which expresses it, derange the whole economy of evangelical motives, subvert the only recognized basis of a Christian character, and introduce a principle of inextricable confusion, where order and beauty, symmetry and strength, are seen otherwise to reign. This is strong language. Whether it be too strong, let those who dispassionately weigh the grounds of it determine.

2. Similar remarks may be made upon all those passages in which the second advent is brought to bear upon "the *sinners* in Zion"—despisers of gospel grace—such as the following:—

> 'The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power in that day."—(2 Thess. i. 7–10.)
>
> "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night," &c.—(2 Pet. iii. 10.)
>
> "And this know that if the good-man of the house had known in what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye, therefore, ready also; for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not."—(Luke xii. 39, 40.)
>
> "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, ... until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all: even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."—(Luke xvii. 26, 27, 30.)

Is it necessary to ask whether such warnings would be at all applicable to sinners living *after* that event, so full of

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terror to the wicked *now*, shall have been numbered amongst the things of the past?

Thus, one half of the Scriptures would be inapplicable to *saints*, and the other half to *sinners*, living after Christ's coming: In other words, *the Scriptures as a means of grace, will be put* OUT OF DATE *by the second advent.* It is "a light shining in a dark place UNTIL the day dawn," and nothing more.*

In reply to this it is urged, that though "the Old Testament was a book written for men before the first advent, and applicable universally to such alone, this did not hinder the profit we derive from the Old Testament since his first coming."† But this is to mistake, and not at all to meet, my argument. It is not the mere fact that an event is *past*, that makes the recorded predictions of it and preparations for it useless ever after. It were absurd to maintain this. But it is the *nature of the event*, which I say would render the Scriptures inapplicable and useless to any living after it. What is that event? It is "the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ"—"the day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained"—"the day of judgment and of the perdition of ungodly men, against which day (alone) the heavens and the earth that are now are kept in store"—the day, in fine, of which Himself says: "Behold

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* The Duke of Manchester asks if I include the *preached* with the *written* word here; because if so, he "denies that *that* will cease at Christ's advent, believing from the prophets, that after the Lord comes with fire (Isa. lxvi. 15), his glory will be declared among the Gentiles (verse 19)."—(P. 290.) Undoubtedly, I say the same of the preached as of the written word. As to the passage which his Grace adduces from Isaiah, I can hardly conceive it possible that any one should apply the details of that prediction to the second advent.

† Mr. Bickersteth (*Divine Warning*, p. 316). To the same effect, Mr. A. Bonar (p. 127), and the Duke of Manchester (p. 291).

I come quickly, and my reward is *with me* (μετ' εμου), to give every man according as his work shall be." How different the bearings of *this* coming upon men's eternal destinies, from that of his first coming! Why, in this respect, it is just the reverse of it The first coming *opened* "the door" of grace, which the second coming will "*shut*." (Matt. xxv. 10; Luke xvii. 26–30.) The first coming—far from rendering the Old Testament inapplicable, or putting it out of date, for believers under the gospel—only opened out its riches, making it, in some respects, more valuable to *us* than even to those under whose economy it was written. The *old* and the *new* dispensations are, in fact, but *one dispensation of grace*—the former being preparatory to the latter—the latter perfective of the former—both together embracing the infancy and maturity of the same economy of grace. In short, of his first advent the Redeemer expressly says, "I came not to *judge* the world but to *save* the world." Can such a saying be found respecting his second advent? No, but the reverse of it continually. Ever is it said that he comes to "*judge*"—never once that he will come to "*save* the world." It does not follow, then, that because Christ's first coming—to save—did not supersede the Old Testament, his second coming—to judge—will not supersede both Testaments as means of grace; but the opposite clearly follows. If the object of the Scriptures be to prepare men for "that day" which will be the crisis and consummation of the state of grace, surely the arrival of that day must supersede their use

PROPOSITION THIRD:

THE SEALING ORDINANCES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WILL DISAPPEAR AT CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.

The very terms of their institution are singularly decisive on this point.

I. With respect to BAPTISM, how conclusive are the glorious words of its institution:

> Matt. xxviii. 18–20: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach," or "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Here we have Christ's commission to establish his kingdom upon earth, the authority on which that commission is based, and a gracious encouragement to undertake and go through with it. The commission is, properly speaking, twofold—*missionary* and *pastoral;* but there is a sort of third intermediate department, holding of both, linking the two together, and forming, if I may so speak, the point of transition between the missionary and the pastoral departments of the work prescribed—I mean that of *baptizing.* "Go, make disciples of all nations"—Subjugate the world to me; bring all nations to the obedience of faith." This is the missionary work. This done, "Baptize the converts in (or *into*) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Generally speaking, this was to afford the converts an opportunity of making public profession of the faith they had embraced—to be a solemn declaration of their principles and purposes, and their formal separation from a world lying in wickedness. But, more particularly, it was to be *God's* solemn investiture and public infeftment of believers in all the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Ghost; and to be *their* solemn pledge that they yielded themselves to this triune Jehovah as their God and portion, and would cleave to him in love and obedience as his redeemed people. Thus were they and their seed to be visibly declared the Lord's, and enrolled the disciples of Christ; and being thus formed and organized into *churches*, the Christian ministry immediately assumed a new character. The missionary *aggressor* of those that were *without* now merges into the pastoral *overseer* of them that are *within*—whose work is to train and mature those organized clusters of disciples for glory, or, as here expressed, to "teach them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded us." Such, then, is the Commission. The Authority is that of him "to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth" for this very end. And the encouragement is, "Lo! I am with you alway, *even unto the end of the world.*" (*συντελεια του αἰῶνος*). At this "end of the world," then, whatever he meant by it, the whole work here described is to cease. Fortunately, we have no need to spend a moment in fixing the sense of this phrase; for it is agreed on all hands that it denotes *the time of Christ's personal coming.** This being the case, what do we learn from this passage? Why, clearly,

That THE WHOLE WORK OF THE MINISTRY, both in its *missionary* and *pastoral* departments—embracing the *making*, *baptizing*, and *training* of disciples—together with *Christ's mediatorial* POWER *and* PRESENCE, *for the discharge of it*, *are to terminate at his second coming.* The bare reading of the words makes this as clear as any comment on them could possibly do. Nor let any say, that though the *external machinery* of the Church may be changed, the work of saving souls may still go on. For in this passage, the *means* and the *end*, the *grace* and the *channels* for conveying it, the *form* and the *substance*, are plainly bound up with each other.

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* See pp. 34, 35, where we found that same expression, "the end of the world," occurring thrice in one chapter in this same sense.

II. As to THE LORD'S SUPPER, what can be more conclusive than

> 1 Cor. xi. 26: "*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death* TILL HE COME"?

That the cessation of this precious and characteristic ordinance of the Christian Church is here intimated, I argue, not so much from the word "till," as from the manifest design of the statement itself, which was to teach the *perpetuity* of this ordinance in the visible Church—its continuance as long as there should be a Church upon earth in which to show it forth. According, then, to the apostle's teaching, the visible Church-state and this ordinance are to terminate together, and both at Christ's coming. And is not this what any one would take for granted, from the nature and intent of the ordinance itself? The Lord's Supper is the symbol of that double attitude of the believer—to which we find ourselves ever recurring—the backward look of his faith and the forward look of his hope—its present crucifixion and anticipated glorification with his Lord. Now this is precisely the note which the apostle strikes. He seems almost to go out of his way to get at this, his favourite collocation. He does not bid them show the Lord's death in the Church "always, even to the end of the world"—though that had come to the same thing—but he bids them celebrate His *death* for them, till, as their *Life*, they find themselves appearing with him in glory. "Show the Lord's *death* till he *come*"—till the affecting be turned into a joyous scene—till the grace ye draw from his first, shall merge into the glory ye receive at his second coming—till he whose table ye bedew with your tears, in "fellowship with his sufferings and conformity to his death," shall interrupt your communion and break in upon you with his glory, and swallow up faith in sight; giving you in place of the symbols, the immediate and eternal fruition of Himself. Thus, the Lord's Supper will cease to be celebrated after Christ's coming. not because the Lord of the Church has so willed it, but because after that it would be meaningless—because *the state of things and the attitude of the believing soul, with reference to the two comings of Christ, of which the Lord's Supper is the ordained and beautiful symbol, shall then have no place.*

What, then, have we found with respect to these ordained means of grace? Why, that the second advent, come when it may, will put them all out of date. The passages which teach this make no distinction between the means and the end; they so implicate the *grace* conveyed with the *means* of conveying it, that both are seen disappearing together at Christ's coming. If, then, there is to be a millennium *after that*, it cannot be an era of Christianity; for the whole Christian furniture, and with it all the Christianity that has hitherto obtained has been withdrawn from the earth. The *word* is inapplicable—it was for a totally different state of things: the *ordinances* are gone: and the "*grace* which hath appeared unto all men, bringing salvation"—having no more salvation to bring, because "the blessed hope and glorious appearing" to which it points all its possessors as a future event, has become a present and glorious reality—this grace, of which the sacraments are but the symbols and exponents, has retired from the field. having accomplished all its objects.

These conclusions are sufficiently startling, one should think. But it is not every thing that startles the advocates of this commanding theory. Mr. Brooks, for example, not only admits all that we have said about its putting the Scriptures out of date, but conceives that this very circumstance furnishes valuable confirmation of his view of the advent. One whole essay, entitled "The approaching New Dispensation," is devoted to this point; and I have to entreat those who are not hopelessly committed to the doctrine of the pre-millennial advent, to look well in the light of the following extract, whither it is likely to lead them:—

> "Startling, then," says Mr. Brooks, "as it may appear to some, yet I apprehend it will be found that *the Holy Scriptures would, for the most part, be rendered inapplicable to the then existing circumstances of men in the flesh, and that there would need some further revelation from God.** Now, I think it must be allowed, that a state of things which *supersedes a portion of divine revelation* hitherto enjoyed, and introduces man into a state of things *which is the consummation of that revealed*, has one grand characteristic of a new dispensation."

The first of the things which are to "render the Scriptures for the most part inapplicable," Mr. Brook says, is the *binding of Satan*, and its consequences; regarding which he tells us, that

> "All that is written for the comfort of the believer under such circumstances—the promises set before him, to sustain him during the conflict, and the experience of the cloud of witnesses, recorded for his encouragement, will become comparatively *a dead letter*—a matter inapplicable to the circumstances in which the Church can, for a thousand years, by any probability be placed. I forbear," he adds, after one or two other examples of this kind, "to bring forward many other particulars, which would obviously be rendered NUGATORY *by our Lord's personal advent.* What I have advanced is sufficient to evince, that the whole character of the Church and of the state of mankind would be so

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* "To avoid being misunderstood, I would observe, that when I say the Scriptures would be for the most part inapplicable, I am aware that there are many glorious declarations concerning the divine attributes and conduct (!), which could never lose their power and influence on a regenerate soul."

altered, together with their spiritual and religious circumstances, that we should no longer find them portrayed generally in the length and breadth of Scripture; and it would not, perhaps, be too much to say, that the great bulk of what are called *practical discourses*, at present delivered or published, would be as much unsuited to the condition of mankind as they would *were they addressed to the angels of God!* This view of the subject," he continues, "is strikingly confirmed by referring to the past history of the Church, and reasoning from the analogy of the case. Whensoever any great change has been made in its circumstances and condition, it has always been accompanied by a further revelation from God, concerning the dispensation about to be introduced, and containing also some intimations of the dispensation to succeed. . . . . Again, each decidedly marked era in the history of the Church, has not only been accompanied by an increase of revelation, but by a disannulling or superseding of something going before. . . . . When, therefore, a similar difference shall exist in the use of the New Testament revelation, it will be equally manifest that a new dispensation has arrived. *Nor will the Scriptures*, SUPERSEDED IN THE MILLENNIUM, *be devoid of interest or use;* but they will serve in the way of retrospection and memorial; excepting some very few passages, respecting 'the little season,' when Satan shall be loosed—and the events which are to follow."

On this *memorial* use of the Scriptures during the millennium, there is the following singular note, which I take the liberty of introducing into the text:—"Thus the *manna*, given in the wilderness, *ceased* on the entering of the Church into the promised land; *but a pot of it was laid up in the ark as a memorial!*" *

Thus, then, the Scriptures will be "superseded," as being "inapplicable" during the millennium; and all "practical discourses," founded upon Scripture, will be as "unsuitable as to the angels of God." These Scriptures, however, will not be *altogether* "devoid of interest or use."

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* Abdiel's Essays; Investigator, vol. ii. 267–270.

They will "serve in the way of retrospection and memorial," like the pot of manna, when the earth shall be flowing with the milk and the honey of a *new* and *more "applicable" revelation!*

But possibly these are extravagances of Mr. Brooks, alone, unsanctioned by his brethren. If it were so, the inconsistency would be theirs, not his. Certainly, a NEW DISPENSATION is what they are all looking for, and perpetually dwelling on; and it is a necessary part of their scheme, since the millennium they are expecting will be so organically different from any thing now existing, that it would be ridiculous to imagine it realized, save under a new and perfectly unique dispensation. And who can fail to see that a new dispensation necessarily implies a NEW REVELATION to usher it in; in other words, to *authorize* and *organize* it? I am quite aware of the harshness of this sound in the ears of many excellent pre-millennialists, who flatter themselves that their doctrine may be held without tacking to it the repulsive expectation of a new revelation; and who, amidst the cloud of difficulties in which their scheme is enveloped, in this view of it, are fain to betake themselves to their favourite refuge—that 'we have nothing to do with difficulties.' But the following extracts will show that Mr. Brooks is far from being alone on the subject of a new revelation.

> "There are," says Mr. BICKERSTETH, "some original and valuable remarks on the millennium in the essays of the Rev. H. Woodward. He shows HOW INAPPLICABLE THE SCRIPTURES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, written for a tempted and suffering Church, ARE TO THIS STATE OF THINGS, and thence draws an argument for the personal advent of our Lord on earth, TO OPEN THE VERY FOUNTAIN FROM WHICH THE SCRIPTURES THEMSELVES HAVE FLOWED, FROM WHICH NEW STREAMS MAY ISSUE FORTH TO WATER A RENOVATED WORLD, AND MAKE GLAD THE CITY OF GOD." *

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* Guide, pp. 295, 296. Fifth Edition.

"We may expect [during the millennium] further means of grace,"—says the same author, in commenting on my quotation from him in the foregoing paragraph—"and A VISIBLE ECONOMY POSSIBLY OF ORAL REVELATION FROM THOSE WHO REIGN UPON THE EARTH, as we see in the Jewish economy." *

In other words, the glorified saints who are to reign on the earth, may "orally" communicate the mind of God to those then living in the flesh, as the prophets did of old to the Jewish people, and a visible economy of such oral revelation may characterize the millennium!

"These passages of Scripture," says Dr. M'NEILE, "avowedly belong to *this dispensation*. . . . But, on the supposition that the dispensation is to enlarge itself by degrees into the universal blessedness predicted by the prophets, then THESE SCRIPTURES WILL NOT CONTINUE TO APPLY; and who is to determine"—he means, without a new revelation—"at what point of the progress they cease to be applicable? It is obvious, that in the passage from our present state to a state of universal holiness, THESE CHARACTERISTIC SAYINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT MUST CEASE TO HAVE ANY APPLICATION, AND BECOME OBSOLETE, NOT TO SAY FALSE: and again I ask, who is to determine at what point of the progress they cease to apply? † We maintain, therefore, that as the statutes of the book of Leviticus continued binding, until another plain and direct communication from the God who gave them showed that they were superseded, and a better order of things introduced; so these Scriptures, describing the experience, the number, and the character of the Lord's people, under this dispensation, must continue applicable, TILL ANOTHER PLAIN AND DIRECT COMMUNICATION, FROM HIM WHO GAVE THEM, SHALL SHOW THAT THEY ARE SUPERSEDED, and a still better order of things introduced. THIS COMMUNICATION WE EXPECT AT THE SECOND COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." *

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* Divine Warning, p. 316.

† The passages selected, as then inapplicable, are such as the following: "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way of life;" "Be not conformed to this world;" "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord." On these passages I shall have occasion to touch by and by.

We have thus the testimony of our friends themselves—and these not certainly the extremest section of them—in favour of the main position of this chapter, namely, that the second advent will *put all that we now have*, in the way of means, *out of date.* We, indeed, carry the matter a very little farther than they do. They talk of a *new order of things*, and, in connexion with this, they look with perfect consistency for a new revelation authoritatively to launch it: I have endeavoured to show that the *old* order of things, which Christ's coming is to supersede, includes not only the present *means* of grace, but the *grace* itself conveyed by them. They will not go this length; but whether they are far short of it, let the reader judge. When they have found that *millennial Christianity* will be so different a thing from the Christianity of the New Testament that it will need a revelation for itself—when they have found (though some of them demur to this), that "the gate" into it will no longer be "strait," nor the way of it any longer "narrow;" that there will be nothing to "come out and be separated from"—no "world," the "love" of which is incompatible with the "love of the Father"—and no devil—most people will imagine that they have got rid of some rather important features of Christianity itself. *Satan* is gone; *the world* is gone—that is to say, as in any respect inimical to salvation; and if the gate into spiritual safety be not strait, nor the way of it narrow, *the flesh* must be gone also.† Whether, after this, "the *grace* which bringeth *salvation*" will have any thing to do—whether it would not be rather *in the way*—whether, in short, such a view of millennial Christianity be any thing more savoury, or more intelligible, than the *Adamism* from which they profess to stand aloof; or, rather, whether it be not *this same Adamism*, if it be any thing more than an inexpressible abstraction—we may leave unsettled just now, as we shall have occasion to dissect it when we come to investigate the *character* of the millennial era. Meantime I cannot but hope, that, prepared as are some of the advocates of the pre-millennial scheme for all this, and more too, rather than abandon their beloved theory—there are others, and not a few, who will think its advantages rather dearly purchased at this expense, and will suspect that a scheme involving an obligation to look for such things does not look like a Scriptural one.

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* Lectures on the Jews, pp. 79–81. First Edition.

† "I am not quite clear (says the Duke of Manchester) as to what Mr. Brown intends here. Satan and the world are not important features of Christianity," &c.—(P. 292.) I can hardly think that this pleasantry will puzzle any one. We have been accustomed to think that the

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divine life is as much a *militant* state here as it will be a *triumphant* state hereafter; and that "*he that* OVERCOMETH," and none else, will ever "see life." Whether this can apply to such a millennium as we are asked to believe in, is the point I speak to.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

I HAVE shown that the ordained channels or means of grace dry up and disappear at the second advent; and that wherever this is intimated, the grace conveyed is so bound up with the means of conveying it, that neither can without violence be torn asunder from, or be imagined to survive, the other.

But I said that the *agencies of salvation* would cease at the same time; by which I mean the present work of Christ in the heavens, and the work of the Spirit, as the fruit of it. The truth on this subject, which I shall now illustrate from Scripture, may be expressed as follows:—

PROPOSITION FOURTH:

THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST, AND THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT, FOR SAVING PURPOSES, WILL CEASE AT THE SECOND ADVENT.

I. The *ground* and the *nature* of Christ's intercession are sufficiently known. But what I wish to be observed is the *place* which it holds in relation to His two advents. It stands *intermediate between his first and his second coming*, as the following passage, viewed as a whole, plainly shows:—

> Heb. ix. 12, 24–28: "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption

> for us. Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."

Here the two advents stand at the two extremities of Christ's mediatorial work, while the intercession stretches from one to the other, and occupies the whole intervening period. Each of these three things is termed an "appearing"–the word being somewhat different in each case, but the idea essentially the same—and each of them is said to be done *once*. Thus: "*Once* in the end of the world hath he *appeared* (πεφανερωται) to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "By his own blood he entered in *once* into the holy place"—"not in the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, now to *appear* (εμφανισθῆναι) in the presence of God for us." "And unto them that look for him shall he *appear* (οφθησεται) the second time [once for all] without sin, unto salvation." The first and the last appearances are to *us:* The intermediate appearance is to *God*, *for* us. This intermediate appearance—"in the presence of God for us"—carries into effect the work of his *first* appearance to us, and prepares the way for his *second.* As he appeared the first time "to *put away sin* by the sacrifice of himself," so he will appear the second time, "*without sin*, unto salvation." Now, as the second coming is here represented as *crowning the* *whole purposes of the first*, it is plain that the intercession, which is but a continual pleading upon the merit of his death, must be over, for all saving purposes, before he comes.

Let the reader now connect this view of Christ's intercession with the following :—

> Heb. vii. 25: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Taking this expression, "to the uttermost" (εις το παντελες) comprehensively, it may denote that Christ is able to save "completely as to all parts, fully as to all causes, and for ever in duration."—(Owen, *ad loc.*) But as the contrast here between Christ and the high priests under the law, is made to hinge upon his "ever living" to discharge his office, while "they were not suffered to continue by reason of death," I think the apostle, by this expression, means *perpetuity*—to the uttermost case, to the last object, and the last necessities of that object, for whom salvation is designed and required. His people, may, one by one, disappear from the stage; but their Intercessor liveth. Age after age shall find him at his post. And the last soul that "comes unto God by him," shall find him "in heaven itself, there appearing in the presence of God for him," a Priest in perpetuity before the Mercy-Seat.

"Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

The last soul that ever shall be saved will be the fruit of this glorious intercession as well as the first.

If these observations be just, they go to settle the whole question. When the Advent arrives, the Intercession is done; and, when the Intercession is done, Salvation is done. When Christ appears the second time to *us*, he will cease to appear in the presence of God *for us*.*

2. The second branch of our proposition, regarding the *work of the Spirit*, must stand or fall with the first. For

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* In the former edition of this work, I dwelt upon the *sphere* or *locality* where the intercession is conducted—"the holy place not made with hands," "heaven itself," "at the right hand of God;" affirming that as Christ's *going in* within the veil corresponds to his ascension from the earth, and session at the right hand of God, so his *coming out* again, as did the high priest at the close of his work, answers to his glorious return to us at his second advent; and thus, that the period of his intercession is just the time of his absence from us in the heavens—neither less nor more; and that, while there is one outstanding soul to be gathered in, he cannot leave his present abode, nor alter his present attitude "in the presence of God for us."

I am satisfied that this is correct. But as great pains have been taken to show that it is not so, I will show that my argument from the intercession of Christ is not dependent on that particular aspect of it, by waiving it altogether. It has been said, for example, that the locality is of no consequence; that there is nothing to hinder the Redeemer from interceding on earth as well as in heaven—on the Mount of Olives as well as at the right hand of God—and that though it was necessary that he should *go*, it was not necessary for him to *stay* within the veil, even for a moment, with a view to the exercise of his present office as our "High Priest over the house of God." I believe I could show this to be unsatisfactory and incorrect. But as my argument from the *position* and the *period* of the intercession—as intermediate between the two advents—and therefore ceasing necessarily when the second, the consummating advent, arrives—is complete without it, I am content to let the other alone.

Nor do I enter into the questions which have been raised about the continuance of Christ's intercession, and in what sense, after the whole Church has been gathered and perfected. I will not be drawn into such matters. The proposition I have laid down is, that Christ's intercession for saving purposes (by which I mean, *the inbringing of sinners and the perfecting of saints*), will cease at his second coming; and this I think I have established. Let me refer the reader to *Calvin* (Instit. Lib. iii. cap. xx.), *Turretin* (Theol. Elenct. Loc. xiv. Quæst. xv.), *Owen* (on Heb. vii. 25, and ix. 24–28), *De Moor* (Comm. in Marckii Comp. cap. xx. § xxix.), *Symington* (Atonement and Intercession, pp 348–357.)

as the mission of the Comforter is through the intercession of Christ, and the continued effusion of the Spirit results from the continual intercession of our High Priest, the second advent, if it bring the latter to a close, must be the terminating period of the former also.

The passages which show the connexion of these two things, are such as the following :—

> John vii. 38, 39 : ' He that believeth on me, out of his belly [the depths of his inner man] shall flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive ; for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given] ; because that Jesus was not yet glorified."
>
> Chap. xiv. 26, 17, 26 : " I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever ; [even] the Spirit of truth. The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things."
>
> Chap. xv. 36 : " When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father."
>
> Chap. xvi. 7, 14 : " It is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. He shall glorify me : for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."
>
> Acts ii. 33 : " Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this."
>
> Tit. iii. 5, 6 : " He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."
>
> Rev. iii. 1 : " These things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God."
>
> Chap. v. 6 : " And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the Throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood A LAMB AS IT HAD BEEN SLAIN, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are *the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*"

But why quote passages expressly linking the mission and work of the Spirit with Christ's sacerdotal Intercession and regal Glory at the right hand of God? For it is admitted on all hands, that the whole application of Christ's work in the flesh is accomplished in every one of his people, from first to last, by the agency of the Spirit, communicated through his continual intercession. Thus this department of Christ's priestly office holds at once of the purchase and of the application of redemption. The actual salvation of any soul, as it is by virtue of his meritorious death which his intercession pleads, so it is through the agency of his Spirit which that intercession procures. In this intercession the merit of his death and the might of his Spirit find their legal connexion, and by means of it the one passes into the other. There is a continuous presentation of his sacrifice, or of Himself in the virtue of it, in order to a continuous acknowledgment of his right to receive and dispense the Spirit to each of his redeemed in succession, down to the last, when he "appears the second time without sin, unto salvation." This appearing lies, as we have seen, at the other extremity of the Redeemer's work. We have nothing here to do with questions regarding the active agency of the Spirit, the exercise of intercession, and other mediatorial functions of Christ, in the *everlasting state.* My views on that subject differ in nothing, I suppose, from those of others sound in the faith, and of my esteemed opponents in this great question. But it is with the intercession of Christ and the work of the Spirit *for saving purposes*, or during the period when the saving of souls is going on—that I have exclusively to do here. And this, I think I have shown, is to *cease at the second coming of Christ.*

The force of our reasoning on this head is felt and admitted even by pre-millennialists themselves, when their particular scheme of the advent does not happen to *require* their opposition to it. Take the following proof of this from good *Joseph Perry*, "an unworthy servant in the work of the gospel," whose pre-millennial system certainly has its own difficulties, as we have seen, though this is not one of them :—

> "There are some things," says he, "that these last do hold (meaning those who in his day held the views now most prevalent amongst pre-millennialists), that I cannot by any means assent to; and that is, when Christ shall be established upon the throne of his glory, in his kingdom, and all the saints with him, in a perfect, incorruptible state of immortality, that then there shall be preaching of the gospel, and conversion-work go forward among the multitude of the nations that shall be found living when Christ cometh, according to the opinion of some good men. I say this is that which I cannot fall in with, but must profess my dislike against, because I cannot believe that *the Lord Jesus Christ will come down from heaven, and* LEAVE THAT GREAT WORK OF HIS INTERCESSION NOW AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND, UNTIL THE WHOLE NUMBER OF GOD'S ELECT AMONG JEWS AND GENTILES ARE CONVERTED, AND THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST IS COMPLETED. AND IF SO, WHERE IS THERE ANY ROOM FOR CONVERSION-WORK TO GO ON AFTER THIS ?"*

The honest man never thought there could be a question about Christ's coming putting an end to his intercession. And what he could not comprehend was, how, when his coming had brought him out from within the veil and put an end to his intercession, his mystical body should still be incomplete, and conversion-work go on as before.

So natural is this view of the intercession of Christ, that we find even those to whose system it is fatal, letting it slip from their pen, as if unaware at the moment what they were conceding. For example, in one of the volumes of

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* Glory of Christ's Visible Kingdom, pp. 219, 220.

Lent Lectures on the Second Advent, I find Mr. Barker, on Heb. vii. 25, thus expressing himself—

> "It is absolutely necessary to remember that the word 'ever' signifies *continuity*, not *eternity* of action; for THE OFFICE OF CHRIST AS OUR INTERCESSOR WILL HAVE ITS CLOSE WHEN HE HAS BROUGHT ALL HIS PEOPLE WITH HIM."* And when will that be? The whole tenor of the lecture answers, at the time mentioned in his text, when 'the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout,' when 'we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with the risen in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'"—(1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.)
>
> "When Messiah," says the Duke of Manchester, "shall leave the 'Holy of Holies,' where he has now entered, to 'appear in the presence of God for us'—INTERCESSION WHICH IS PECULIAR TO HIS BEING IN THE HOLY OF HOLIES, SHALL HAVE CEASED. Coincident with this (he adds), upon resigning the kingdom (that in which he *now* reigns, but which he will resign at the millennium) to the Father, *he will leave* '*the throne of grace*,' on which *he shall reign until the effectual application*, *by the Holy Ghost*, *of all his work towards* '*the restitution of all things*.'"†

And now, summing up the argument of these two chapters, what have we found? We have found that when Christ comes, as the Church will then be complete, so the means of grace and the agencies of salvation will then terminate. In other words, *as there will then be no more souls to be saved*, *so the whole provision for saving them will be withdrawn*. The object of *the Scripture* will be exhausted;

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* The Hope of the Apostolic Church, p. 184. Compare p. 204. 1846.

† Horæ Hebraicæ, p. 90. 1835.

In his "Finished Mystery," his Grace seems to intimate that I have so far misunderstood him, as at least to draw a wrong inference from his statement. I regret this, and the more as I have not been able to catch the precise import of his explanation. The reader, therefore, will bear in mind that his Grace does not admit the conclusion which his words seem to suggest.

both *the sealing ordinances* of the New Testament will disappear, and with them *the grace* which they "signify and seal;" in a word, *the intercession of Christ* and the *work of the Spirit*, for saving purposes, will then terminate. I have not sought to establish one of these positions as a mere *inference* from another. Each of them has been established independently of all the rest. Each of them is thus a *check* upon the rest, and a *test* of their soundness. And thus the whole argument on this branch of our subject is *cumulative;* making it evident, on a number of different but connected grounds, that *a millennium after the second advent* was never designed, is not provided for, and will not take place.

CHAPTER VII.

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST—ALREADY IN BEING—ITS MILLENNIAL ESSENTIALLY THE SAME WITH ITS PRESENT CHARACTER—ITS ORGANIC FORM UNCHANGED.

Two things are in question here—the PERIOD and the NATURE of Christ's kingdom and reign. But as the one determines the other, it will be most convenient to handle them together. It is a very glorious and comprehensive branch of our subject. The points embraced under it, however, are of the most multifarious description, the texts with which we are met heaped up with often little or no classification, and the speculations drawn out of them almost endless. Besides, on no part of the subject are our friends more at variance amongst themselves. When you have disposed of the texts and demolished the views of one writer, you find another untouched, who claims to be heard and tried on his own merits. More than once have I thrown down their books with a sigh, having lost myself in the thicket of texts and contradictory opinions in which I had got entangled, and nearly despairing of being able to bring order out of this mass of confusion. If, however, we can seize on such prominent characteristics of Christ's kingdom and reign as our friends agree on amongst themselves. and bring these to the test of Scripture, the intelligent inquirer will be satisfied, and all that is essential will be gained.

The following proposition, then, will be all but universally assented to by those whom we oppose: That the proper kingdom and reign of Christ are yet to come; that the millennium is its period; that having come the second time before that era, and taken possession of the throne of David in Jerusalem, he will reign there in person for a thousand years, with his risen and changed saints, over the restored and converted Jews in their own land, and through them over the whole Gentile world.

Let us hear some of them on the subject.

> "We maintain," says one, "that CHRIST HAS NOT YET RECEIVED ANY KINGDOM WHICH HE CAN DELIVER UP. A man can only lawfully deliver up that which is *his own;* but by this theory (meaning Mr. Scott's), Christ is made to deliver up that which is NOT HIS OWN, but the Father's. He occupies, no doubt, the Father's throne, being seated there beside him, and that throne he may leave; . . . but, . . . *we are not aware that ever in the New Testament, 'the kingdom' is used as denoting the present seat of the Father's power in heaven.*" Again: "Now, Christ is only seated upon the Father's throne. He is only, as it were, *exalted in another's right*, and *invested with another's power;* but in the day of coming glory, he is to assume HIS OWN SCEPTRE, TO SIT UPON HIS OWN THRONE, and exercise dominion in a way which he has not hitherto done. He is to take to himself his great power, as if it had been lying beside him unused, and only in reserve for the day of its full display, when he receives the crown of all the earth." *

Here it is very nakedly affirmed that Christ *is not now, nor ever yet has been, on any throne of his own*—and consequently is *king* as yet *in no proper sense of the term;* that his present exaltation is *not in his own right*—that he is occupying another's throne—swaying another's sceptre—wielding another's power.

But may not this be but the rash language of an individual writer? Is the sentiment responded to by the acknowledged representatives of the pre-millennial scheme? Let us see.

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* "Presbyterian Review" of Mr. Scott's "Outlines of Prophecy," Jan. 1846, pp. 469, and 468, 9.

"Sit thou," says Dr. M'Neile, ' on my right hand *until*"—when? when thou wilt leave my right hand and *sit on thine own throne* . . . . *when he shall have delivered up the kingdom which he at present enjoys*, where he wields the authority, *the universal kingdom of God—the invisible kingdom of providence.* When the Lord Jesus shall (in the exercise of his present almighty authority on the Father's throne) have subdued all things unto himself, then shall he be prepared to leave the Father's throne, and set up *his own kingdom* upon the earth as the second Adam.*

Let us now hear Mr Bickersteth. His chapter on "the Kingdom of Christ" is very vague, and sometimes seems to concede all that we contend for. But to make out the *futurity* of Christ's *proper* kingdom is undeniably the main object of his chapter. For, after laying down five characteristics of that kingdom not yet realized, and which show it to be *future*, he adds, "There is, however, a *preparatory* and spiritual kingdom already established."† In this case, of course, the kingdom must be organically different from any thing now existing. For, as yet, only the means of it and the *preparation* for it exist; and it is impossible that the means and the end should both be of the same character,—that the preparation and the thing prepared for should not be essentially different.‡

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* Sermons on the Second Advent, pp. 112-114, 5th edition.

† Guide to the Prophecies, pp. 301, 302, 5th edition.

‡ In his "Divine Warning" (p. 311, note), referring to the *vagueness* which I have ventured to ascribe to his chapter on the Kingdom of Christ, Mr. Bickersteth says, that "in another work on the promised glory of the Church, he has entered more fully into the subject." From the Duke of Manchester's remarks, I gather that it is the Lent Lectures for 1847 to which Mr. Bickersteth refers. I have read his Lecture in that volume, but cannot find from it that I have given a wrong view of Mr. Bickersteth's notion of *the Kingdom*. The Duke of Manchester seems to think I have. If so, it is after much pains to ascertain the

The Duke of Manchester is equally explicit.

"There are two thrones," says he, "mentioned in connexion with Messiah, one, on which he is now sitting, the other, on which he is hereafter to sit. The one the throne of God, the other the throne of David; the one for a limited, the other for an unlimited period. For want of discriminating between the two, much confusion has been created, and some detriment to all the expressions in Scripture which denote eternity. It may not be amiss to lay down some positions respecting the kingdom of Messiah, for which I refer to Appendix D." Turning to Appendix D, we find the first part of it devoted to proving just what has been expressed in the foregoing quotations, that the present "session or reign of Christ at the right hand of God," is his participation in the Divine government,—that "his ruling now for God implies his present providential universal presence,"—that "*the supreme kingdom of God* is the one which he gives up on leaving his right hand, and that it is HIS OWN KINGDOM in which he *shall* reign, when he appears, for ever and ever." *

"The notion," says Mr. Brooks, "that the kingdom of Christ signifies the present visible Christian Church, or the Christian religion in the hearts of God's people, or both,—and *that it has been manifested to the world ever since the establishment of Christianity*,—is

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right one, and I should deeply regret to have mistaken him. But I think I have not. I do not for a moment doubt, as will presently be seen, that Mr. Bickersteth and every one of the writers I quote from, including his Grace himself, look upon Christ as now exercising saving authority, and that in a royal character. But what I wish to show from their own writings is, that as they are looking for *another* kingdom of Christ to be set up during the millennium, and that *his own* in a peculiar and emphatic sense, continually reiterated, his *present* kingdom is not *the* kingdom of Christ in their view

* Horæ Hebraicæ, pp. 89, 114–116. The capitals are the author's own. I have taken the liberty of combining in one sentence the contents of two or three.

His Grace objects to my classing this passage along with what I have quoted from "the pre-millennialists, as it was actually directed against them." But I think he will admit, that in so far as it was directed against the ordinary pre-millennial view of the "giving up of the kingdom," it illustrates my point more than the other quotations.

in the main erroneous, inasmuch as it mistakes the *means* for the *end*, and substitutes what may be considered as the *preparation* for the kingdom, for the *establishment* and *manifestation* of it." *

Nothing can be more explicit than this. It represents quite correctly what we hold,—that the proper kingdom of Christ has been "manifested ever since the establishment of Christianity." In direct opposition to this, Mr. Brooks' doctrine is, that we have never yet seen, nor till the millennium shall see, more than a *preparation* for Christ's kingdom. The establishment and manifestation of it are reserved for "the thousand years." A little farther on he speaks out, if possible, still more clearly:—

> "If," says he, "it shall appear that Christ's kingdom was to be manifested under this present dispensation, then it will be evident that the kingdom was to be nothing more *than the propagation of Christ's religion*, or *his ruling in the hearts of his people*, or *the usual sovereignty of God manifested in his providential government;* but if, on the contrary, it shall appear that *it was not in its primary sense to be manifested under this dispensation*, and *has not been manifested*, then it determines that its *character* will necessarily be something far more exalted and *different* from what has hitherto been witnessed." †

Just so. If the kingdom of Christ neither was to be, nor has been, manifested during this dispensation—if it is to *commence*, as a proper kingdom, only with the millennium, Mr. Brooks is perfectly right in concluding that its CHARACTER "will necessarily be something different from what has been hitherto witnessed."

But Mr. Brooks seems to qualify his statement, by saying, "It was not to be manifested *in its primary sense* under this dispensation." I should like very much to know what this means. For at the outset of his chapter on the Kingdom of Christ, from which this extract is taken, we have found him saying, that those who think the kingdom is already established, "*mistake the* MEANS *for the* END, and substitute what may be considered as the PREPARATION *for the kingdom, for the* ESTABLISHMENT *and* MANIFESTATION *of it.*" So that after all, this "*primary* sense" in which Mr. Brooks seemed willing to allow that the kingdom "was to be manifested, and has been manifested, during this present dispensation," turns out to be no sense at all. The millennial state of things is the *end;* the present is but the *means.* The kingdom of Christ no more exists now, than the preparation for a thing is identical with the establishment and manifestation of the thing.

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* Elem. of Propht. Interp., p. 182.

† Ibid., pp. 190, 191.

Here, then, I join issue with these writers, affirming as follows:—

PROPOSITION FIFTH:

CHRIST'S PROPER KINGDOM IS ALREADY IN BEING; COMMENCING FORMALLY ON HIS ASCENSION TO THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, AND CONTINUING UNCHANGED, BOTH IN CHARACTER AND FORM, TILL THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

To guard, however, against mistakes, let the following explanations, which I give once for all, be borne in mind:—

(1.) It is not meant that the kingdom of Christ was in no sense in being before his ascension in our nature to the right hand of power. On the contrary, it is maintained that *the whole grace* of the Mediator, *in all his offices*, is put forth in the salvation of every soul that is saved, as well before his incarnation as after it; and more particularly, that in the administration of the new covenant and government of the Church before the fulness of time, there was as rea an exercise of the Redeemer's proper sovereignty as there has been since his ascension, or ever will be till the end of time. Still we are explicitly told, that "the Holy Ghost *was not given*"—up to the period of Christ's ascension—"because that Jesus *was not yet glorified.*" (John vii. 39.) And in whatever sense the Spirit was *not* given till Christ was glorified, in that same sense were his offices not exercised. What that sense is, is well enough known. All the grace that ever was put forth before the Redeemer's death, was given *on the credit* of it. It being to the Divine mind infallibly certain, from the foundation of the world, that at the appointed time Christ would suffer, it was held done and accepted in the court of heaven, and authority given from the very first to extend salvation to as many of his people as should live before his incarnation; in other words, to bring all the mediatorial offices into play, through the Spirit's agency, from the very date of the fall. When, however, the great Sacrifice was actually offered, and when on his presenting himself, in the merit of it, before the Majesty on high, it was actually accepted, his title to save was *formally recognized*, and himself FORMALLY INSTALLED IN OFFICE. "The Holy Ghost was *then* given, because that Jesus was now glorified,"—given now for the first time, not actually but formally, having it, legal ground now for the first time palpably laid in the finished and accepted work of the blessed Surety.

Let it then be clearly understood in what sense I speak of Christ's kingdom as *commencing* at his ascension. Scripture speaks so; and though it is right to guard against misapprehension in the use of such language, it is not right, for the sake of avoiding it, to adopt other ways of speaking, lest with the change of language we insensibly slide into a change of conception, and miss what God designs to teach us. So much, then, for the *commencement* of the kingdom. But, (2.) When it is said that Christ's kingdom will continue in its present form till the final judgment, it is not meant that it will *absolutely terminate*, as Christ's kingdom, even then. On the contrary, it is maintained that there is a glorious sense in which it will be "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"—"the kingdom of *Christ* and of God" What that sense is, I shall by and by have occasion to consider. All that is here meant is, that Christ will not hereafter occupy his throne *for the same purposes* as now—for putting more souls in possession of salvation, and for perfecting any thing then incomplete in the salvation of his elect. That work will terminate; and it is with reference to that, and that alone, that I say the kingdom of Christ will then terminate.

(3.) When it is said that Christ's kingdom will continue *in its present form*, from the period of his ascension onwards until the final judgment, it is not meant that its progress will be uninterrupted and equable throughout—marked by no mighty changes in its external aspect, in its relative position, and in the development of its internal character. The very contrary is maintained, as will afterwards appear. What is meant is, that its external administration will continue the same,—that its constitution, structure, organic form, will remain unaltered,—that no new economical arrangements, or change of *dispensation*, will be introduced from the commencement to the close of its earthly career.

I hope these explanations will make my proposition clear, and serve to bring this question about the kingdom of Christ to a definite issue. There is much need of this. Pre-millennialists never grapple with the question, Wherein lies the *essence* of Christ's proper rule as a King? They tell us "*there is a sense* in which Christ was a king, even during his humiliation;—*a sense* in which he is now a king

—'exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins;' and *a sense* in which the kingdom of Christ is still future—when 'dominion and glory and a kingdom shall be given him, that all people, nations, and languages should serve and obey him,' after the destruction of the fourth beast." * But when we ask them what that "sense" is in which they consider Christ to be *now* acting the King—what sort of royalty they ascribe to him when he 'gives repentance to Israel, and the remission of sins,' all the answers given leave us very much in the dark. To admit that Christ is now a king, inasmuch as he is now giving repentance and remission of sins, can mean nothing more than this, that though these be in some sense royal acts, they are not the acts of Christ's *proper royalty*,—that being still future. If this be not the meaning intended, I despair of finding it out. I have tried, but can make nothing more of it. I ask again, Is *mediatorial and saving rule the proper and formal character of Christ's kingdom?* If it be, of course the kingdom is already in being, the king already on his proper throne, and the reiterated and emphatic denials of this by our opponents must be given up, as dishonouring to Christ. But if, on the other hand, the kingdom of Christ be yet future, and himself not yet on the throne of it, it is self-evident that his kingly office can have nothing essentially to do with *salvation;* for that is going on without it. It is inconceivable that salvation should stand in need of an office not ye in exercise—that it should be dependent at all upon a office not to be assumed, or at least not to come into play, till the millennium. If Christ's proper royalty can be dispensed with till then, and the economy of salvation be in full operation notwithstanding, it cannot be indispensable to salvation at all.*

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* Mr. Wood's "Affirmative Answer," pp. 37, 38. See also Mr. Bickersteth's and Mr. Brook's Chapters on the Kingdom of Christ.

With these observations I now proceed to the proof of our proposition—that the kingdom of Christ is *already in being;* that commencing strictly and formally, on his session at the right hand of God, it is destined to continue *unchanged in character or form* till the final judgment.

Here I take my stand upon the

APOSTOLIC VIEWS OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

As contained in the numerous addresses to the Jews which we find in the Acts, and some subsequent statements in the apostolic epistles.

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* It may be said here, that as I have admitted Christ's offices to have been in exercise before the time of their formal assumption, others may surely hold the time for assuming the kingdom to be yet future, without denying Christ's present royalty. The answer to this is very plain. If they held the royalty in both cases to be of the same *character*, we could understand the reply. But it is not so. We hold that the sovereignty which Christ exercised before his incarnation was, in its formal nature, precisely the same as he is now exercising. Its foundation, in his finished work, which was then only *assumed* to exist, has now indeed been actually laid. The Redeemer has now been formally, as before his incarnation he was virtually, installed in office. But that is all the difference, upon our principles. We do not make Christ's kingly rule before his coming to be but the *means*, and his present rule to be the *end;* but hold that, under both economies, one and the same sceptre was wielded over the kingdom by its proper King and Head, and in the exercise of his proper sovereignty. Now, it is just the reverse of this that our friends affirm; namely, that the rule proper to Christ—THE kingdom—has never yet been in existence. In this case, it cannot be formally of a *saving* character. Salvation does not need it. It can go on, as it has for thousands of years gone on, quite well without it. Men needed the exercise of the *prophetical* and the *priestly* offices of Christ for their salvation; but they can be saved, it seems, without the exercise—without even the assumption—of his *kingly* office, in the strict and proper sense of the term "King."

If any where, surely we may expect light here. The one question between the Christian Jews and their unbelieving countrymen was about THE KINGDOM—what was the *nature* of it. The overwhelming majority of the Jewish Church and nation rejected the claims of Jesus to be their Messiah, solely because he was not *the sort of king* they thought they had good reason from the prophecies to look for, and because *the kingdom* which he announced, and of which he claimed to be the sovereign, was quite different from what they imagined the ancient prophets had foretold. This was definite ground, and it was not taken without deliberation.

When the Baptist announced Messiah's approach, every thing concurred to give weight to his testimony. Guided by the signs of the times, and by the chronological predictions, expectation was every where awake for the first sound of Messiah's footsteps. From all parts of the country they flocked to the man of God, who cried aloud in the wilderness, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand: Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight." With profound and breathless attention the motley group listened to the exciting tidings; and harsh as were his accents, rougher though some of his speeches were than the garment which he wore, they willingly bore with them, were with difficulty restrained from mistaking the servant for his Master, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. Presently the Lord himself appears upon the stage; and the Baptist having dutifully handed his disciples over to him, with this noble testimony, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," retired, and was little more heard of. Thus, heralded, the Saviour's ministry opened with every advantage; and crowds followed him, as they had done the Baptist, "trusting that it was he who was to redeem Israel—saving them from their enemies, and from the hand of all that hated them."

But again they were doomed to disappointment. Every discourse he delivered—every expression he gave of the nature of his kingdom—convinced them more than another that he was *not the king* they were looking for, nor *his kingdom* that which they thought the prophets had assigned to their Messiah. Under this persuasion, the most majestic, miraculous, and moral evidences went for nothing with them. Disappointment settled down into chagrin; chagrin into rage; and rage into a settled determination to deal with him as a blaspheming impostor according to law, who must die the death It was done. But lo! they had laid the foundations of that *kingdom* which his forerunner and He had announced as at hand; and *this was just the glad tidings which all the apostles went forth among their countrymen to proclaim.* The burden of all their recorded addresses is just this, that the nation *had misunderstood the prophets, and had mistaken the nature of the kingdom which they predicted;* that it was in being while they spoke, and not a kingdom of this world, as they supposed, but a kingdom of *Salvation* or of *Grace;* whose *foundation* was that accursed death which they, in their ignorance, had imagined to be the end of all the claims of its King; and whose *Rule*, from the seat of his exaltation in the heavens, was purely a mediatorial and saving sway.

If this be a correct representation of the apostles' addresses to their unbelieving countrymen, it obviously cuts up the pre-millennial view of the kingdom of Christ. Nay, it places the pre-millennialist and the unbelieving Jew in the same category as respects the question in hand, *both holding the same error on the subject of the kingdom which the apostles set themselves to overthrow.* The error, say the pre-millennialists, into which the Jews fell, was that of over looking the distinction between the first and second comings of the Messiah; the one in suffering, and the other in glory; the one to save men's souls, and the other to erect his kingdom upon earth. As the latter is the theme of most of the prophecies, they were so carried away by the expectation of, and desire for it, that they missed altogether the former, which, though occupying less space in the prophecies, is intrinsically more important.

I think I have here rightly represented what they say. It is somewhat entertaining, however, as well as instructive, to observe in what light the sensible Jews of modern times, who have given attention to the question, and written in justification of their rejection of Jesus, regard this representation of the matter. They look upon it as a mere afterthought, and as an evasion of the real question between Jews and Christians. David Levi, in his "Dissertations on the Prophecies of the Old Testament," calls it "a mere chimera, an *ignis fatuus*, notwithstanding all the noise and pother that has been made about it."* Doubtless, pre-millennialists have much more *spiritual* views of the whole subject than an unbelieving Jew can be supposed to have. But they *both* oppose those views of the kingdom which *we* maintain; and in so doing they use arguments identical in substance, and only differing in the *Christian* or *Anti-Christian* point of view from which they survey their common ground; as will be evident on comparing their works together. The kingdom—*say both alike*—is yet to come: Jesus—say both alike—does not occupy the throne of the kingdom: The prophecies relating to Messiah's kingdom remain yet to be fulfilled—say both alike.†

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* Vol. i. p. 120. Lond. 1817.

† "The Jews," says Mr. Brooks, "understood them (the prophecies relating to the kingdom) *in their appropriate and harmonious sense*, though not perhaps in their *full* sense; and *the wonder is, not that they*

I have said—and I entreat the reader's attention to it—that the apostles, in pleading with their unbelieving countrymen, take up precisely *our position against the pre-millennialists* regarding the kingdom of Christ. This I now proceed to make good, taking up one or two of the apostolic addresses as they are given in the Acts. And,

1. We have the famous Pentecostal sermon.

> "Men and brethren," says Peter—we give the quotation somewhat in brief—"let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David. Being a prophet, and knowing that God hath sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would *raise up Christ to sit on his* (David's) *throne:* He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ. This *Jesus hath God raised up*, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore BEING by the right hand of God EXALTED, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this. THEREFORE *let all the house of Israel know assuredly*, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both LORD and CHRIST."—(Acts ii. 29–36.)

Here it is stated as explicitly as words could do it, that the promise to David of Messiah's succession to his throne *has received its intended accomplishment*—that God HAS raised up Christ to sit upon that throne, in the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, as the fruit of David's loins, to the right hand of power; and that *his first exercise of regal authority from the throne of Israel* was to send down the Spirit, as had that day been done. When, moreover, he adds that God had made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ, he manifestly wished to be understood—and could

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should have thus understood them, but that any among ourselves should understand them otherwise; seeing that *their primary and most obvious sense is so plainly accordant with the Jewish expectations.*"—Elem. of Prophet. Interp. chap. vi. on "The Kingdom of Christ," p. 185.

not fail to be understood—as affirming, that *his present exaltation was his proper lordship or royalty, as Messiah.* And finally, when—as if emitting a solemn testimony—he calls upon "all the house of Israel to know this assuredly," it is quite clear that he knew how unwelcome his view of Messiah's lordship would be to Jewish ears—requiring them not only to believe that the predicted Messiah and king of the Jews was Jesus of Nazareth, but that their notions of the Messiahship itself, and of the royalty attached to it, were all wrong; that it was this erroneous view of the prophetic testimony respecting Messiah which had plunged them into the perpetration of the greatest of all crimes, and the removal of which, when the veil should be taken away, would revolutionise the Jewish mind.

Pre-millennialists scout the notion of Christ's *now* sitting on David's throne, and ask a great many questions as to the points of analogy between the throne on which sat the humble son of Jesse in the midst of his subjects in Palestine, and the celestial seat of the Redeemer's present power. One is pained at the flippancy with which these questions are sometimes put, and the gross principles on which the point is decided. In whatever *sense* the seat of Christ's present rule is termed *David's throne*, the *fact*, I will venture to say, is indisputable. That CHRIST IS NOW ON DAVID'S THRONE, is as clearly affirmed by Peter in this sermon as words could do it. Let any one read his words again, and see if it be possible to make any thing else out of them. Mr. Wood tries it: but his interpretation is sufficient to show the hopelessness of the task.

"We maintain (says he) that this passage asserts that David knew that Christ was to sit upon his (David's) throne, and that moreover he had himself prophesied that he should sit at God's right hand until his enemies were made his footstool; *that is, as* *we believe, until the time* should come when he should sit down on the throne of David, and therefore he prophesied of the resurrection of Christ, and not of his own, just as it was of Christ, and not of himself, that he said, the Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."*

This strange style of interpretation reminds me of a discussion I once had with a zealous follower of Joanna Southcote, who applied to the child of that deluded woman the words of the prophet, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." But are we not (said I) expressly told of the birth of Christ, that it was done in fulfilment of this prediction? Not at all, replied our ingenious disputant. Look again at the evangelist's words, "This was done," not *in fulfilment* of the prediction, but "*that it might be fulfilled*" in another person, and at a future time: Christ's birth, then, merely prepared the way for, or was a necessary step in the march of events which were to bring about the fulfilment of that famous prediction. And what else is the character of Mr. Wood's version of the words of Peter? "David," says the apostle, "knowing that God would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne, spake of the resurrection of Christ: This Jesus (accordingly) hath God raised up." So he has, says Mr. Wood, but only to sit on David's throne *at some future time.* "Christ's resurrection," says Peter, "was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by David, that he would sit upon his throne." Yes, says my respected brother, but it was done, not *in fulfilment* of the prediction, but only *that it might be fulfilled*—to prepare the way for the future fulfilment of the prediction.

On the contrary, Peter evidently wished the people to understand, that Christ was already swaying the only sceptre they had to look for in their Messiah:—saying in effect, The kind of royalty ye have been looking and longing for is a phantom; but the reality is already in being. "MESSIAH THE PRINCE" already sits enthroned on high, in the person of the crucified but risen Nazarene, ready to dispense, not the poor honours of an earthly sovereignty —for the Rule of David's Successor is not like the rule of David himself—but "repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins:" God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified "both LORD" to RULE, "and CHRIST" to SAVE you!

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* Affirmative Answer, p. 50.

In this view of the apostle's meaning, it is but a translation, into New Testament language, of Zechariah's majestic prediction,

> "Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: Even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory; and He shall sit and rule upon his Throne, and he shall be A PRIEST UPON HIS THRONE, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."—(Zech. vi. 12, 13.)*

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* Mr. Wood throws this glorious prediction of Messiah's royal priesthood into the *millennium*, and he thinks the context proves it future. I wish I could say that in this he stands alone. But there is too much of this tendency, in the whole pre-millennial school, to *futurize* the most precious prophecies of the Old Testament. In the "Quarterly Journal of Prophecy" (No. I., Oct. 1848), there is a Paper entitled "Objections and Difficulties," in which this prophecy of the union of the *kingly* and *priestly* offices in the person of the Messiah is declared to be a prediction of Christ's *millennial* glory—'He shall be a Priest upon his throne.' "This verse (says the writer) is commonly (he should have said universally, and in all time, with the sole exception of a handful of pre-millennialists) interpreted of the *present* time. Christ, it is said, is now upon his throne, and is executing at once the offices of a priest and of a king. This interpretation, however, appears to be *entirely erroneous*." ' He then assigns some reasons for holding the union of offices therein set forth as wholly future—reasons, on the strength of which it were

And is not this precisely what is scenically represented in the vision which the rapt apostle beheld in Patmos, I mean *the present priestly or saving rule of Jesus over his Church, and over all things for his Church's sake?*

> "And I beheld, and, lo! IN THE MIDST OF THE THRONE and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood A LAMB AS IT HAD BEEN SLAIN, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth."—(Rev. v. 6.)

Here is "the *Priest*"—the Lamb of God; and that Priest "upon his *Throne*:" Here he is seen "building the temple of the Lord"—sending forth for this purpose those *eyes* and *horns* of his, "the Spirit of *counsel* and of *might*" (Isa. xi. 2), into all the earth,* to bring its inhabitants under his benign sway: And here, certainly, he is seen "bearing the glory" in those rapturous hallelujahs poured into his ear—("Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," &c.)—so dear to the heart and sweet upon the lips of his redeemed

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easy to expel the Christianity which we fondly thought we had found in fifty other prophecies, till at length we were within sight of the Jews' conclusion, that Christianity in the Old Testament is an impertinence, which a thorough-going literal interpretation of it, with proper regard to the context and scope of each prophecy, would show to have no place and no business there. . . It is the vice of the pre-millennial theory, that it of necessity hands over to the future, and to a new and unique dispensation, whole masses of prophecy, which, in the view of the great bulk of the true Church in all time, belong to the dispensation of the Spirit—to the economy of the Gospel—to *Christianity just as it now exists*, with its present *Word* and its present *Spirit*, as competent to affect all that is predicted. Once make the *throne of David*, as occupied by Christ, *future* and *local*, and it will go hard with us if we do not find ourselves compelled to *futurize* one gospel prophecy after another, till Christianity itself, as a *present* thing, hardly remains to us in the Old Testament.'—(*Free Church Magazine*, Jan. 1849.)

* Compare Zech. iii. 9, "Upon one stone (of the temple of the Lord) shall be seven eyes."

in every age. At the date of the vision they were a mere handful, and struggling for existence; but, speaking for all, they anticipate the time when every hostile power shall go down before them, and they "shall reign on the earth."

That the Redeemer himself identifies his present sway with the *Davidical Rule*, is clear from the following words of his epistle to the Church of Philadelphia:—

> "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, HE THAT HATH THE KEY OF DAVID, *he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;* I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out," &c.—(Rev iii. 7, 8, 12.)

These words are evidently taken from Isa. xxii. 22, where the Lord tells Shebna, "who was over the house," but had by his base intromissions brought the royal house to the brink of ruin, that he would call his servant Eliakim, and would clothe him with his robe, and strengthen him with his girdle, and would *commit the government into his hand*, "And," it is added, "THE KEY OF THE HOUSE OF DAVID WILL I LAY UPON HIS SHOULDER; SO HE SHALL OPEN AND NONE SHALL SHUT, AND HE SHALL SHUT AND NONE SHALL OPEN." When Christ, therefore, claims to have the key of David's house, so as to open and shut it at will, his meaning clearly is, that he has that antitypical authority in David's house which Eliakim's robe, girdle, and key, faintly shadowed forth; that he is *now* exercising this power of "the key," as he did to the Philadelphian Church, when in opposition to a party "calling themselves Jews when they were not, but did lie," and who had denied the claim of these faithful Philadelphians to a church-standing and church-privileges, he says, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." But if Christ is now using "the key of the house of David" in his administration of the Church, then that *house of David*—as Christ is ruler in it, at least—*can be none other than the Church of the living God under the Redeemer's regal administration*, which is just what we have found Peter pressing on the unwilling ears of his carnal audience.

In this view of Christ's "having the key of the house of David laid upon his shoulder," can it for a moment be doubted that we have the true and only sense of that sublime prophecy of him by Isaiah, where, after saying, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given," he adds, "AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER," as the supreme *Ruler of the Church?* And if this be the sense, it determines the meaning of "the throne of David" in the next verse beyond all question. After summing up his august titles with that one, "The Prince of Peace," which in the New Testament sense of "peace"—by the blood of his cross—is just the "Priest upon his Throne," the prophet adds—

> "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, UPON THE THRONE OF DAVID, AND UPON HIS KINGDOM, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."—(Isa. ix. 6, 7.)

In understanding this of *the administration of Jesus in the Church*—in the *sovereignty* and the *grace* of it, the *righteousness*, the *progress*, and the *perpetuity* of it—we would appeal to the reader whether we have not given a sense equally sound and soul-satisfying, which a patient comparison of Scripture with Scripture will only the more confirm, and on which the heart can repose with ever growing contentment.

But Jesus says, in the use of the same "key of the house of David," to the faithful of Philadelphia, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out"—as if he had said, I will not only admit him to membership in the Church upon earth, in spite of all pretended excommunications by the "synagogue of Satan;" but, in virtue of my office as Ruler in the house of my God, I will "set before him an open door" into the heavenly temple. and make him a fixture in it, to go no more out. In this extended, but most legitimate, application of "the key of the house of David," as it is on Christ's shoulder, it is identical with his own consolatory announcement to John himself, when lying prostrate before his effulgent majesty as one dead: "He laid his right hand upon him, saying, Fear not, I am the First and the Last, and the Living One; and I became dead, and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen. And I have THE KEYS OF DEATH AND OF HADES."* 'The key of the world of spirits is mine, to bring back the souls of my dead people—the spirits of just men made perfect—from their disembodied state; mine, too, are the keys of the grave, which at the appointed time shall yield up its precious deposit: I am the Resurrection and the Life, and as, having the keys of my Father's house, they shall find its portals on the resurrection-morn flying open before them, that they may go in, never more to go out.'

Thus clearly does it appear, from the Redeemer's language to the Church of Philadelphia, that "the house of David" is the house of God's Church or people, over whom David had a rule of a very inferior kind in Palestine, in comparison with that to which it ultimately pointed; that

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* *Εγω ειμι ὁ πρῶτος και ὁ εσχατος, και ὁ ζῶν· και εγενομην νεκρος . . . . του θανατου και του ᾅδου.* (In this order the concluding words are found in the best MSS.)

"the key of David," or of "David's house," in Christ's hand, is just the supreme administration or rule of the Church; and that as he exercises this 'power of the key' now in the Church, so he will exercise it in its loftiest sense, when he "sets before his victorious people an open door" into the heavenly temple, whence they shall go no more out.

II. In his next address—to the wondering people who stood gazing on him after his miracle on the lame man, at the beautiful gate of the temple—the same idea is expressed with equal brevity and beauty:

> "The God of our fathers (says he) hath *glorified his Son Jesus.*" —that is, in the apostolic sense of the phrase, hath raised him up and enthroned him in the heavens—"whom ye delivered up. . . . Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed THE PRINCE OF LIFE, whom God hath raised up from the dead; whereof we are witnesses."—(Acts iii. 13–15.)

Here Messiah's *Princedom* is not only admitted but proclaimed; but the sense given of it is as opposite as the poles from the Jewish one, and expressly intended to displace it. He lets them know that they mistook something else than the *time* of the kingdom—which, according to some, was all they did mistake about it; that its whole *nature* was misconceived by them; that it was for the dispensation of "LIFE" that he is exalted a "PRINCE." "Ye killed him; yet he lives—the Royal Dispenser of Life to the dead—THE PRINCE OF LIFE to save *you.*"

In the sequel of this address we have that noble passage about "*the times of restitution,*" so constantly and confidently adduced in favour of the pre-millennial theory, but which I think completely subverts it

> "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, to the end that your sins may be blotted out; that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and he may send Jesus Christ, which before was ordained (or preached unto) you: whom the heaven, indeed, must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—(Acts iii. 19–21.) *

In the note below, the reader will see that great diversity exists as to some things in this passage.† But as this diversity affects but slightly what I have to observe on the words, we need not stay upon it here.

Whether we understand the "restitution" here meant of a *moral* or a *physical* restitution, or *both*—considered as the burden of all Old Testament prophecy, and requiring complete accomplishment ere Christ can come—the words of the apostle are clearly subversive of *a millennial state after*

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* I have given Mr. Elliot's version (*Hor. Apoc.* iv. 208, second edition), with two slight exceptions, as most faithfully expressing the sense of the text, according to the best MS. authority. In my former edition, I was too closely guided in my remarks by the *textus receptus*, and overlooked the imperfect rendering even of this in our authorized version. Even Bengel, I observe, who adopts the reading "*fore-ordained*" (*προκεχειρισμενον*), had remarked that the other reading "*fore-preached*" (*προ εκηρυγμενον*), is scarcely to be found any where. All subsequent critical editors adopt the former reading, and their authorities seem quite decisive.

† 1. What is meant by "times of refreshing"—whether the times of the gospel generally, as some with *Lightfoot* think; or, the time of Israel's conversion—the latter day, according to *Vitringa* and others; or whether, as *Calvin* and many judge, it be the same period with "the times of restitution," when "He shall send Jesus Christ"—in which last case the "blotting out" is understood in the well-known sense of the public judicial declaration, at the great day, of pardon already obtained upon earth. 2. Whether we should read "*which*," or "*of which* God hath *spoken*."* 3. What is the "restitution" here meant.

* In the former case, ὧν is *attracted* by the preceding *παντων*, and is equivalent to ἃ or οὓς (*καιρους*).

Christ comes. For, as it is admitted by nearly all pre-millennialists, that there will be both *sin* and *death* during the millennium, and that after the thousand years *a vast rebellion* will break out *upon the earth*, and *fire come down* from heaven and *consume the rebels*,—how can it for a moment be alleged that the *restitution of all things*, foretold by the prophets, will be brought about *before the millennium?* Mr. Elliott, in his remarks on this passage, while he takes a great deal of pains to settle the sense of the words, says nothing to throw light upon this question.

The reader may observe that, in quoting the words, I have inserted the particle "indeed" (μεν)—"whom the heaven, indeed," or "however, must receive."[*] It is as if the apostle had said, 'I have told you that the return of Jesus from the heaven must be preceded by the "times of refreshing," which your "repentance, and conversion, and forgiveness," as a nation, will bring about; the heaven, *however*, must receive him not only till then, but till the times of restitution of all things, which is the burden of prophecy. But when nothing shall remain incomplete in the kingdom of God, then he will come: Meantime, "unto you, first, God having raised up (from the dead) his Son Jesus, *hath sent* him, in the power of his Spirit, to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.'"—(V. 26.)

This famous passage, then, instead of making for pre-millennialism, tells decisively against it. And I may add, it was one of the passages which convinced *Joseph Perry*—pre-millennialist though he was—that there could be no such millennium after the Lord's coming as is now contended for.

> "The last restitution," says this good man, "or the restitution

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[*] Particula μεν, *quidem*, apodosin, cui alias *autem* servit, representatum habet in *mittat*, versu 20.—(BENGEL.)

of all things, will not be, as I conceive, until Christ's personal coming. As the heaven 'received him,' so it will retain him until this time, in which all things shall be restored. . . If but one soul should be converted after Christ's descension from heaven, then must he come before the restitution of all things; which is quite contrary to this text; because the 'heaven must receive' or retain him *until* then. What though this restitution of all things takes in the restoration of the creation unto its paradisiacal state: yet it is certain that the bringing in of the elect by regenerating grace, and completing the whole mystical body of Christ, is the principal part of that restitution, they being principally concerned in it, and for whose sake all other creatures are to be restored; all which plainly shows that there will be no more conversion when Christ is come; which will not be until the restitution of all things, as before hinted." *

III. In the following chapter we have a touching scene, and a bright application of Old Testament scripture, which, if I mistake not, is as subversive of the pre-millennial, as it certainly was of the Jewish, principles of interpretation, and their views of the kingdom: "Peter and John being let go," hasten "to their own company, and report all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them;" on which the audience give vent to their feelings, and commit their now critical cause, in a sublime prayer, to Him who, having "made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is," could with infinite ease sustain them; and who, "by the mouth of his servant David," had foretold the very things that were then happening to them. And to which of David's psalms are their thoughts directed? To one whose very burden is *the Throne and Kingdom of Messiah.* Here then, if any where, we may look for light. Its topics are the combined attacks of civil and ecclesiastical rulers against this Throne—the derision with which these are regarded by Jehovah—the immoveable security of his "King upon his holy hill of Zion," whereon he hath set him—and the certainty with which all who will not "kiss the Son," or bow their hearts and bend their policy to his sceptre, shall be "dashed in pieces." Pre-millennialists make all this *future;* and that is the vice of their system. "It was not in its primary sense to be manifested under this dispensation, and has not been manifested," say they. But what say this worshipping company? They apply the psalm, beyond all contradiction, *to the present Sovereignty and Rule of Jesus in the heavens.*

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* The Glory of Christ's Visible Kingdom, &c., pp. 224, 225.

> "The kings of the earth stood up,"—say they, quoting the words of the psalm—"and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ. For of a truth *against thy holy child Jesus,* whom thou hast anointed," as Messiah or Christ, "both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do what thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—(Acts iv. 26–28.)

In the estimation, then, of this band of primitive disciples, "the vain things which the people imagined," and which the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers took counsel to accomplish, was just to overthrow *the gracious Rule of Jesus*, whose sweetness they were then tasting in the salvation of their own souls, and whose power was bracing them to the endurance even of death for his name. It was the "bands" of this saving authority over men which they saw them resolving to "break asunder"—it was the "cords" by which it sought to bind them in believing subjection, which they saw them madly determining to "cast away from them." And if this view of the second psalm do not prove that *the proper kingdom of Christ is now in existence*—that it is administered, not from a poor throne at Jerusalem, but from the heavens—

and that it consists, strictly and formally, in the royal dispensation of grace by him as a Saviour, and the saving rule of the subjects of that grace—it is difficult to conceive what kind of evidence would be held competent to establish it.

IV. But the noblest expression of the idea, which we have found to be the burden of Peter's early addresses to his unbelieving countrymen, as well as the favourite conception of Messiah's *Grace* and *Glory* amongst the converts, occurs in this apostle's second speech before the Jewish council, when being demanded why, in contravention of their peremptory command "not to teach in that name," they had "filled Jerusalem with their doctrine, and intended to bring that Man's blood upon them," Peter, with the heroism of faith, replied,

> "We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. *Him hath God exalted* with his right hand to be A PRINCE AND A SAVIOUR, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."—(Acts v. 29–31.)

Let the reader put himself into the position of the Jews whom Peter addressed, whose perverted notions of the Princedom of their promised Messiah inflamed them with such "a zeal of God not according to knowledge," as to plunge them into the guilt of his precious blood; and he will be satisfied that it was just these notions which Peter meant to dissipate, and in place of them to lodge in their minds a view of the Messiahship to them altogether new—to describe the Princedom of Messiah as strictly a SAVING dignity—for the purpose of communicating, with royal authority and sovereign power, "*repentance* to Israel, and *forgiveness of sins.*" Indeed, the words might be rendered with equal fidelity, and bring out perhaps quite as vividly the idea intended, were they to run thus in English (by what the critics call a *hendiadys*): "Him hath God exalted to be a SAVIOUR-PRINCE ["A PRIEST UPON HIS THRONE"], for to give repentance," &c.*

V. Closely connected with these earliest representations of the regal dignity and kingdom of Messiah, are *the apostolic commentaries on that massive verse of the hundred and tenth Psalm:*

> "Jehovah said unto my Lord, SIT THOU AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES THY FOOTSTOOL."—(V. 1.)

I refer to the following:—

> David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, Jehovah said unto my Lord, SIT THOU ON MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL

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* I have to apologise to the Duke of Manchester for allowing the preceding comments—on Acts ii., iii., iv., v.—to be reprinted before observing the criticisms which he directs against them. His grace finds fault with me for omitting, in my quotation from Peter's first sermon, vv. 34, 35, which has caused me to mistake the apostle's argument, and to confound between what proved Jesus to be "*Lord*," which he now is in the throne of God, and what proves him "*Christ*," which he will not be till he sit down on David's throne at the millennium.—(Pp. 306, 307.) On this I have only to observe, that I am not acute enough to see it in Peter's sermon, and that I am not aware of any commentator who has detected it. In connexion with this, his Grace points out "a curious mistake" into which I had fallen, "he has no doubt by a slip of the pen"—namely, saying a p. 161 (first edition), "God hath made that same Lord" (instead of "Jesus") "whom ye have crucified . . . Lord." This mistake, however, "could hardly have escaped observation had I perceived how much the argument depended on the personal, and not on the official designation."—P. 307. The short answer to all this is, that it was a slip, not of the pen at all, but of the *types* first, and then of the *eyes*, in not observing it. One or two verbal alterations, suggested by his Grace's remarks, I have made as the sheets were passing through the press

> I MAKE THY FOES THY FOOTSTOOL. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."—(Acts ii. 34–36.)

> "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever SAT DOWN ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD; from henceforth expecting TILL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE HIS FOOTSTOOL."—(Heb. x. 12, 13.)

> "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath PUT ALL ENEMIES UNDER HIS FEET. The last enemy shall be destroyed [even] death." *—(1 Cor. xv. 24–26.)

These passages afford abundant materials for settling the whole question of Christ's kingdom. Beautiful is the light which they throw upon each other. "SIT on my right hand (says one of them), till I make thine enemies thy footstool." "He must REIGN" (says another) till that be done by his own royal hand. "From henceforth," (says the remaining passage)—from the time of this glorious *Session* and *Enthronization*, for they are both one—"EXPECTING till" the Father's promise to do it for him be made good. He has entitled himself to this at God's hand, by "the offering of that one sacrifice for sins, for ever" eternal in its efficacy, because infinite in value. On the completion of this work, exalted to the Father's right hand—in the high consciousness of his own merit and in full assurance that the promise is now all his own, our apostle gets a glimpse of him in the seat of power, and beholds him in the attitude of tranquil "expectancy," till the enemies of his regal authority be made his footstool: an expectancy commencing from the first moment of his repose in glory, unruffled amid all opposition, and unexhausted by the longest delays, until the day when he shall rise up to the prey.*

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* Εσχατος εχθρος καταργεῖται ὁ ϑανατος.

On the last of these passages—1 Cor. xv. 24–26—pre-millennialists get into inextricable confusion, and come into such collision among themselves as to subvert the doctrine common to all of them, and establish its opposite. It has been said, indeed, that others are as much divided on the sense of the passage as they. But that is a mistake. It is true that there is some difference between Drs. Owen, Pye Smith, and Symington, on the "delivering up of the kingdom." But what is it? Just a diversity of conception as to the form which the kingdom of Christ shall assume, and the position which Christ himself shall occupy, in the everlasting state. On this point—involving some of the most delicate distinctions in the personal and official relations of the triune Jehovah, and in the economy of grace—on this high point, my own views, which with the deepest humility I may presently try to express, coincide, as I have said, pretty much with those of my opponents. But this has nothing to do with our question about the kingdom. That question is not, What is meant by the "*delivering up*" of the kingdom? but, *What is the kingdom* to be delivered up? To this question the majority of pre-millennialists reply, It is Christ's proper kingdom, not yet assumed—his *millennial* kingdom. Nay—says Dr.

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* Noble are the words of CALVIN: In excelsis ergo sedet, ut transfusâ inde ad nos suâ virtute, in vitam spiritualem nos vivificet, ut Spiritu suo sanctificet, ut variis gratiarum dotibus ecclesiam suam exornet; ut protectione suâ tutam adversus omnes noxas conservet, ut ferocientes crucis suæ ac nostræ salutis hostes manus suæ fortitudine coerceat, denique ut omnem teneat potestatem in cœlo et in terrâ: donec inimicos omnes suos, qui etiam nostri sunt, prostraverit, ac ecclesiæ suæ ædificationem consummârit. Atque hic verus est regni ejus status, hæc potestas, quam in eum contulit Pater, donec ultimum actum ad vivorum et mortuorum judicium adveniens compleat. (*Inst. Christ. Relig.* Lib II. cap. xvi. 16.)

M'Neile, the Duke of Manchester, and several others—it is the kingdom over which Christ is *now* placed, and which he is to exchange for his *own*—the Davidical throne and kingdom—at the millennium.

Here, as perhaps in every instance in which they differ among themselves, there is a portion of truth on both sides, which each can plead against the other with resistless force—portions of truth which it is not possible to harmonize but by abandoning the doctrine common to both, and falling back upon that to which both are with equal zeal opposed. These portions of truth are the following:—

On the one hand, it is beyond all controversy, that when the apostle says, "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet," he not only adopts the *language*, but gives the *sense* of the Psalm (cx. 1,) and that the "reign" spoken of is his *present authority*, as the "enemies" of that reign are those of that same present authority. Mr. Wood, and those who take his view of the passage, may deny this "as entirely unscriptural;" * but it will be in vain. The Duke of Manchester, Dr. M'Neile, and others, who take the apostle here as the interpreter of the Psalmist, are on immoveable ground; and no one would ever take any other view of the passage but for the necessities of a system. To drag the apostle here into the millennium, as if he were speaking of the enemies of a *millennial* sovereignty, is of all interpretations the most preposterous.

On the other hand, it is equally incontrovertible that the "reign" here spoken of, is the Redeemer's Rule in his own proper kingdom, as the enemies are those of that rule. This is so manifest, that Mr. Wood, in asserting it, can stand against all his brethren who affirm the contrary. Observe what the enemies of this reign are. The apostle divides them into two classes—moral and physical. Of th *former* class he thus speaks: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." Will this be done before the millennium? Have we not evidence that *during* that bright period the world's subjection to the sceptre of Christ will not be quite absolute?—(Zech. xiv. 17–19.) And *after* it, are we not explicitly told of a vast confederacy of Christ's enemies to arise against the camp of the saints—(Rev. xx. 7–9)? When Mr. Wood therefore affirms, that "all rule and all authority and power" of a hostile character will not be put down *before* the millennium, and that Christ will have this during that period to do in the exercise of his proper rule, and so will not deliver it up till *after* the millennium—he is on solid ground. Then observe the *other* class of enemies, and it will be still more evident that the kingdom is delivered up, not *before* but *after* the millennium: "The last enemy shall be destroyed, even death." Now *death*, being a physical evil, can be but a passive and unconscious "enemy" of Christ's reign, as "the wages of sin," as the boast of Satan, to be "destroyed" with "the works of the devil" by "the Seed of the woman." In this sense of death as an enemy of Christ, it must be held as including *all physical evils* springing from the fall, and similarly hostile to the ends of Christ's reign. Thus largely understood, not even Mr. Scott can very well maintain that "death" shall be destroyed *before* the millennium. In vain, indeed, does he attempt to prove that death, in the mere fact of it, will not prevail during the millennium. But even he seems to admit that physical as well as moral evils will remain, to some extent, till the end of the millennium.* And thus, as

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* Affirmative Answer, p. 36.

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* Dr. M'Neile, in the volume of Lent Lectures just published (1849), entitled, "The Priest upon his Throne," takes up the same ground as Mr. Scott; but his positions and the illustrations seem to me directly to contra-

Christ is to "reign till he hath put *all* enemies under his feet," Mr. Wood, and those who agree with him, are upon impregnable ground in maintaining that the "reign" here is Christ's proper reign, and the "enemies" those of his own kingdom.

These, then, are the portions of incontrovertible truth, maintained by the two classes of pre-millennial interpreters respectively. The one class hold, upon ground that cannot be shaken, that the "reign" spoken of in this famous

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dict each other, and to exhibit a strange mode of thinking altogether. "The chief particulars (he says) of that state—the state of the earth when Christ comes—are these: 1. *There shall be no more sin.* All the then inhabitants of the earth shall be righteous. All shall love God, and serve God; so that his will shall then be done on earth as it is in heaven. *Or*, if any of the inhabitants of the earth shall at any time cease to do his will [in other words, *if sin do break out*] on earth, they shall instantly be treated as those angels were treated who ceased to do his will in heaven; that is, they shall be cast out. From a passage in the prophecies of Isaiah (lxv. 20), some have imagined that such an event *might possibly* occur during the thousand years; that a man who had lived a hundred years without sin might then become a sinner, and that if so he would be immediately accursed. That such an event shall take place on a large scale *after* the thousand years, seems not obscurely predicted in Rev. xx. 7–10. *But in no case shall the holiness of Messiah's kingdom be interfered with, any more than the holiness of heaven was*, by the great rebellion there of Beelzebub and his associate. 'Of his kingdom there shall be no end.' The final assault, permitted at the end of the thousand years, serves but to confirm his reign for ever; *and so* (!) the state of things then existing, and to exist for ever, on the earth, "*shall be a state without sin.*"—(Pp. 96, 97.) In this way of arriving at conclusions, the reader will not be surprised to learn that Dr. M'Neile finds "no more *sorrow*," "no more *ignorance*," "no more *curse*," from the time that Christ comes—that is, while the earth is peopled by "the restored Jews," and "the millions of the heathen who have never rejected the gospel," and of whom it is written that "they shall come to Judah's light, &c."—(Pp. 97–104. Of course, these "restored Jews and converted heathens" must *start at once* not only into a *converted* state, but into a *sinless, sorrowless, perfectly illuminated and curseless* state, in order to realize the millennial picture which the lecturer draws What can one make of this?

passage is a *present* reign—a reign commencing on the Redeemer's session at his Father's right hand. The other class, on ground equally unassailable, hold that, as the enemies mentioned will not be destroyed till the end of the millennium, the assurance that "He must reign" till that be done, carries the reign down till *after* the millennium. The one class give us the *beginning* of the reign, and the other class the *end* of it, quite correctly. And thus, *in opposition to both, and by means of both*, we get our proposition established—that "the kingdom," and the Redeemer's "reign" in it, as they commenced on his ascension to power, so they will continue till the final judgment, in the sense of commencement and continuance already explained.

How precious is the view given of "death" in this passage, as the Saviour's "last enemy"—the last enemy of that *mediatorial crown* which he now wears, as the Redeemer of his people from the whole ruins of the fall! On his own throne sitting, "a Lamb as it had been slain"—taken up to it fresh from the Cross, and placed upon it in high testimony of Jehovah's complacency in his work—in this character, and vested with this authority and power, will he destroy that last enemy of his gracious sway—death. *Virtually*, indeed, it has been done already—on the field of *law*, though not of *fact*. "Through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil."—(Heb. ii. 14.) "He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross"—(Col. ii. 15.) There he "ABOLISHED," or "DESTROYED DEATH."—(2 Tim i. 10.)* A legal basis had to be obtained for the actual destruction of so righteous a penalty as death, "the wages of sin." In the righteousness of that penalty, Satan was strong. On that field, but for Christ's death, he was invincible. In this sense "the accuser of the brethren" had "the *power* of death"—power to insist on its infliction, on the same eternal principles of the divine government by which himself was ruined as a sinner—power to see it invested, in its approaches to men, with unmixed terrors, with "fearful lookings for of judgment and fiery indignation, to devour the adversaries"—power to *have a hand* in mixing "the cup of trembling" to the dying sinner. Yes! "the sting of death is sin, and *the strength is the law;*" nor could the Son of God himself override these awful securities for the execution of vengeance. But that vengeance he could draw off, by placing himself under it as Jehovah's substitutionary Victim; and this he did—"through death" not actually "abolishing" death, but obtaining a legal title to abolish it from the Throne. He met the enemy on his own chosen field, that proud arena "where was the hiding of his power;" and having "taken from him all his armour wherein he trusted," he has gone up to "divide his spoils." (Luke xi. 21, 22; compare Isa. liii. 12.) And the distribution is going gloriously on. The sweet sense of pardon and reconciliation—the envy of Satan—is one of the spoils he divides. Superiority to the "sin that dwelleth in us," is another of the spoils left on the field of battle, and which, falling into the Redeemer's hands, he divides to his people. But the *death of death* is reserved for the last. Already he is unstinged; so that, though he tears asunder soul and body, leaving what Christ redeemed a lifeless carcase, in this he is no longer Satan's but Christ's servant, who "to this end, both died and rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the *dead* and living" (Rom. xiv. 9), and who, as such, "hath the keys of death and of hades"—(Rev. i. 18.) Still the enemy lives. While his victims lie rotting in the grave, he is not "abolished," "destroyed," "put under his feet." But it must, and it shall, come to that. The Redeemer "expects" that what he accomplished *sacrificially* on the field of *law*, shall be made good *royally* in the region of *fact*. The prey shall be taken from the terrible, and the lawful captive delivered; and thus, in the most absolute and comprehensive sense, should He "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

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* It is the same word (καταργεω) in both places.

It now only remains, before dismissing this grand passage, that I advert to the "delivering up of the kingdom." Not that it has any thing to do with our subject—it relates to a stage of the kingdom beyond the limits of our question. But perhaps it would be unsatisfactory to take leave of it, without some reference to this very remarkable statement with which it closes.

Two ideas, then, seem to be included in this "delivering up" of the kingdom.

1. It is the Mediator "*giving an account of his Stewardship.*"

It is fit that this should be done. As Infinite Rectitude will have his intromissions judicially investigated and pronounced upon, so his own fidelity desires and demands it, that his work may, in this sense, be *taken off his hands.* He will have it publicly owned, and Himself as the Doer of it. For this purpose, he advances to the Throne. His dead people summoned from their graves, and his living ones changed in the twinkling of an eye, are all around him—"a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing;" and as their crowns are cast before him, and his ear is filled with their grateful hallelujahs—"glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe"—he turns to "Him that sitteth upon the Throne," as Judge of his work, saying. "Behold I, and the children whom thou hast given me: The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; and they are one, even as we are one."—(Heb. ii. 13; John xvii. 22.) The Trust committed to him was awful; the wheels of it "were so high that they were dreadful" (Ezek. i. 18); the issues suspended upon the successful execution of it were infinite; the glory of the Godhead was bound up with it: and Jesus, knowing all this, and exulting in the consciousness that his work will abide the lustre of Divine Inspection, will have judgment given upon it, that his ear may be greeted from the Throne with that sound—sweeter to him than celestial music—"Well done, Good and Faithful Servant!" But,

2. This "delivering up" of the kingdom seems to imply *the end of the kingdom in its present form.*

"Then cometh *the end*"—the end, certainly, of something; and the words which immediately follow, "when he shall have delivered up *the kingdom*," seem naturally to suggest this as the thing ended. That a termination *of some kind* is intended, we gather, not from the word rendered "deliver up"—a word which does not necessarily imply, either in classical or Scripture usage, a *giving away* of the thing spoken of, as critics have shown; but we gather it from what is stated at the end of the whole passage, as the *object in view.* "The kingdom," says the apostle, "shall be delivered up—that God may be all in all." Now, explain this as we may, it seems to us to imply something more than the mere presentation of the kingdom to the Father, for the purposes of judicial investigation. Even those who seem disposed to rest in this as the whole sense of the apostle, allow nevertheless, that, in point of fact, there will be a change of form, and a termination of not a few things now going on in, and now characterising the kingdom. And if so, why should we be so jealous of admitting this to be what the apostle means to express?

When Jesus said, as he was on the wing for heaven, "Go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"—he gave out a commission which will undoubtedly be at an end when the time arrives of which our apostle speaks. His concluding words imply as much; "And lo! I am with you alway, *even unto the end of the world.*" Now, this commission is prefaced with the delightful announcement, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; *Go ye, therefore,*"—implying that both the authority to issue that commission, and the power to sustain in the execution of it, were given to the Mediator expressly for those saving purposes. When, therefore, the work is done, the whole Commission is at an end—not merely the matters to be performed, but the whole Mediatorial *Trust*, and the whole mediatorial *Furniture*, of authority and power, of gifts and graces, committed to him for the ends of that Trust.

But does it follow from this, that the Mediator, as such, will sink and disappear? By no means. The termination of which we have spoken *leaves all mediatorial relationships untouched;* and in the two following respects they will undoubtedly be eternal:

(1.) *In his mediatorial merit* Christ must for ever be recognized by the redeemed, and be in that character the Object of their unceasing contemplation and praise. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing"— that dearest utterance of every heart that has ever been sprinkled with his blood—must get out. Nor will it go forth merely in one sublime shout, bursting simultaneously from the lips of all, as they "enter in through the gates into the city"—to die away, or be lost in some other and unknown feelings, kindled by the sight of an altered Lord. No. Nothing will ever content the ransomed of the Lord, but still to discern "in the midst of the throne a Lamb as it had been slain"—ever fresh, so to speak, from the Altar. They will love to feel the *eternal freshness* of his merit, and its righteous power to keep them where they are. As he unveils himself to them in this overpowering character, and they gaze upon him in the vivid, adoring perception of that in him which brought them from hell to heaven, those melodious notes will steal upon his ear, and fill it gratefully through all duration, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen."

(2.) *His Mediatorial Person* will be the eternal SEAT of Divine manifestation; the MEDIUM of communication between the Unseen One and all heaven; and the very PROP of the eternal system. It is on this point that the heart is ready to tremble, as it hears of his "delivering up the kingdom to God, even the Father—that God may be all in all,"—as if it were meant to intimate that, somehow or other, the mediatorial character of its Lord would merge and evanish—a thought abhorrent to saved and grateful souls. But on this point other Scriptures gloriously re-assure us. The heavenly state is in one place called "THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST."—(2 Pet. i. 11.) In another, it is called "*The kingdom of* CHRIST *and of* GOD."—(Eph. v. 5.) And what this last passage expresses nakedly, is in the Apocalypse (as usual) symbolically represented: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of GOD and of the LAMB. . . . And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of GOD and of the LAMB shall be in it"—the new Jerusalem.

(Rev. xxii. 1, 3.) Here, God and the Lamb are named with emphatic distinctness; and the pure river of the water of life is seen flowing from the throne of *both*,—from that of God. as the Unseen, Absolute, Eternal Fountain of life and of love; from that of THE LAMB, as the visible Channel. throughout eternity, of all gracious and beatific communications from God to the redeemed.

"He that hath seen Him will have seen the Father." In his glorious Person, the triune Jehovah will stand confessed and manifested to all heaven and through all duration. Nor will it be mediatorial manifestation only. There will be incessant mediatorial intercourse and communication between God and his people. The river of life, as we learn from what is here said. shall flow, through him, from its Fountain to the souls that shall never have enough of it: and from them it shall be, through the same dear channel, sent back again, in the outgoings of their full hearts and in the services of their perfected natures, without end. Never a benignant look, never a gracious communication, from the triune Jehovah will reach the citizens of the New Jerusalem, but it will pass through, or rather proceed from, his manifested Person: Never a grateful feeling, nor a willing service, shall go from them to the Godhead, but it shall light upon, and be absorbed by, Him "in whom shall be seen dwelling all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Thus the mediatorial relationships will remain,—not in the *passive* state of mere existence, so to speak, but gloriously *active* and effectual. They will be the life of all heaven. The *preservation and continuance* of the heavenly state will be as dependent upon the continued application of his mediatorial merit, and the continued exercise of his mediatorial power, as was the *attainment* of heaven before. As in the kingdom of Nature, "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and rested the seventh day," and yet "my Father worketh hitherto (said Christ), and I work;" as every moment He "upholdeth all things by the word of his power"—the same creative power which called them into being at first;—so in the kingdom of Grace, the whole saving grace and redeeming power of the Mediator will go out incessantly, in the heavenly state, for the preservation and continuance of what hath been attained—for the eternal sustentation of the Church, in its being and bliss.

Thus, in the strictest sense, will it be the "KINGDOM of Christ and of God"—"His appearing and HIS KINGDOM"—"THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST"—"He shall REIGN for ever and ever." In his glorious Person not only shall God be manifested, but restored humanity shall stand represented and headed up, as "the First-begotten from the dead, the First-born among many brethren." "the second Man." In Him also shall "elect angels" find the principle of their stability, and the Head of a system of new creation, of which they are a part; in whom are "gathered together all things in one, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him"—"by whom all things are reconciled, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven" (Eph. i. 10; Col. i. 20.) At the head of this magnificent kingdom of new creation Jesus shall sit, the Life of all its activities and of all its felicities, and the very Prop of its being—feasting himself with the worthy and enduring spectacle. Long he "expected:" Now, he expects no longer, and expects nothing more; for he has gotten all. "He SEES the travail of his soul, and is SATISFIED." He rests and is refreshed. The *Trust-character* of mediation is at an end; but mediation itself is not at an end. The Stewardship has ceased, with all its mutual engagements, and interchanged fidelities, and surrenders and acceptances between the contracting parties. "The Strength of Israel has not lied unto *Him*;" nor has *He* proved to Him that appointed him "altogether as a liar, and as waters that fail." So the Covenant stands fast for ever, and "HIS THRONE AS THE DAYS OF HEAVEN!"—(Psal. lxxxix. 28–37.)[*]

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[*] The farther prosecution of this important branch of our argument I reserve to the second part of this volume; that the stream of evidence under the successive heads, may flow uninterrupted.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ENTIRE CHURCH "MADE ALIVE"—EITHER BY RESURRECTION OR TRANSFORMATION—AT CHRIST'S COMING.

THERE is no part of the pre-millennial scheme, as now advocated, where it comes so entirely *to a stand*, as on the subject of the RESURRECTION. When Christ appears, we are told—at the *beginning* of the millennium—he will raise all the saints that shall have died before that time, and change all that shall then be alive. But what is to become of the *myriads of saints* that are to people the earth during the millennium?

The answer to this question will startle the reader, if he happens not to be well read in the changes which this unsteady scheme has from time to time undergone, and is unacquainted with its latest modifications. The fact is, This whole subject is a *blank* in the system. It has positively got no Scripture on the subject. It applies all that Scripture says about the resurrection of *saints at all*, to those living *before* the millennium. Of course, then, they find it silent about either the raising or the changing of any other saints—without a word about the vast numbers whom they have to dispose of *after* the millennium. What do they do with them, then? For the most part, the subject is avoided. Those, however, who venture to grapple with it, are hurried into such revolting speculations as, I believe, will open many an eye to the true nature of the whole scheme.

I shall not take my statement of these speculations from those who are reckoned extreme men, nor from books which may be supposed to be out of date. The following is from the pen of Mr. BICKERSTETH. The startling nature of it, and its important bearings, will justify our giving it pretty nearly in full.

"If (says he) the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked, and the general judgment of all men, took place at one time, and in the same day, none would, none could be left, *as the heads and parents of a redeemed people on earth* [after the general judgment.] But the Holy Scriptures reveal to us a progress in judgment, and that the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked are clearly distinct in time. There is the first resurrection of the saints at the commencement of the millennium, and after the thousand years the rest of the dead [the *wicked*] live, and are judged. . . . . At the close of the millennium, 'there is a last open apostasy of the wicked,' who during the thousand years had 'yielded only a feigned obedience.' This 'finally separates all the believers, and removes them from the earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. The apostates are first slain by fire, and afterwards raised with the rest of the wicked dead for judgment. But NO CHANGE IS THEN MENTIONED AS PASSING ON THE JEWISH NATION, OR ON THE LIVING RIGHTEOUS, who continue faithful to God, AS IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE SAINTS BEFORE THE MILLENNIUM.* The object of the rebellion, to overthrow the camp of the saints and the beloved city, fails of its design. God protects them. *The living righteous*, then, *after the millennium*, MAY YET CONTINUE A SEED TO SERVE GOD, AND IN SUCCESSIVE GENERATIONS BE TRAINED UP FOR HEAVENLY GLORY.'"

In this statement, the least surprising thing which the reader will mark is, that there is to be no *simultaneous* change of those myriads of believers who have lived

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* I thought the author had, in the previous sentence, "finally removed all the believers from the earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." How he keeps them on earth still, unchanged and untranslated, I am at a loss to understand.

during the millennium, "as in the translation of the saints *before* the millennium." That, be it observed, is given up. What, then, becomes of them? One by one, throughout "successive generations," they get glorified —we are not told how, or on what principle—but *the race of them never dies out:* they live on, and propagate their kind—*to all eternity;* they "continue a *seed* to serve God!"

But possibly this is but a hasty conjecture; for, says the author, "they *may* continue." In the next sentence but one, however, the conjectural is changed into the positive; and page after page is spent in attempts to prove the monstrous position of an *eternal perpetuity* of the generations and families of men in flesh and blood upon the earth.

> "Its truth (says he) is distinctly revealed in many testimonies of Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament. The covenant with Noah was 'an *everlasting covenant* between God and *every living creature of all flesh for perpetual generations.*' The covenant of Abraham is called by the Psalmist 'the word which he commanded to *a thousand generations.*' So Moses describes the Lord as 'keeping covenant and mercy for *a thousand generations.*' This period of a thousand generations, thus repeatedly mentioned, WOULD REACH FAR BEYOND THE CLOSE OF THE MILLENNIUM. The promise made in Isaiah, concerning the kingdom of Christ, and his reigning on the throne of David, are in the strongest expressions of NEVER-ENDING CONTINUANCE. The same promise of perpetuity is often given to the people of Israel: 'The people shall be all righteous, they shall *inherit the land for ever.*'—(Isa. lx. 21.) Corresponding with this is that very full and clear promise, 'They shall dwell in the land, they and their children and their *children's children for ever*, and my servant David shall be their prince *for ever.*' The plain and obvious meaning of such passages would lead us to the conclusion of a *continuance*, both of Israel and Gentile nations in a state of righteousness on our earth." After attempting to show "the consistency of this with the last fire described in St. Peter, and the new heavens and the new earth afterwards to come

forth," he says, "Thus remarkable are the proofs in the Old Testament of the PERPETUAL continuance of the Jewish nation on our earth."*

Mr. Bickersteth's New Testament proofs are still more singular.

"The apostle (says he) closes his prayer for the Ephesians by leading us to the same wonderful fact, of *a perpetual continuance of the Church upon earth:* 'Unto God be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, world without end;' or, as it might be rendered, 'throughout all the generations of the ages of ages.' The apostle James, speaking of believers, says, 'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.' Thus the Christian Church is described as *only the first-fruits of a glorious harvest yet to be reaped on our earth.*"

That is, after "the end of all things"—as we innocently say—for it seems there is to be no end of any thing

"So (he goes on), in the description in the Hebrews of the future glory, and of the heavenly society partaking of it, there is not only the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, but 'the spirits of just men made perfect,' which seems to refer to those gathered, *after the number of the Church of the first-born is* completed."

But enough of these singular specimens of exegesis.†

Soon after the publication of the volume from which these paragraphs are transcribed, Mr. BIRKS' able work on "The Four Prophetic Empires and the Kingdom of the Messiah" appeared. There the same views are stated, the same passages, with a little enlargement, adduced, the same style of reasoning and language employed. A few sentences, however, I will give from this work.

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* The reader will observe how studiously the estimable author avoids saying, "*eternal* continuance." Is it that *an everlasting propagation of human families upon earth* is a sentiment scarcely palatable enough to be nakedly stated?

† "Second Coming," &c. (Lent Lectures for 1843.) Mr. Bickersteth's Lecture is entitled, "The Kingdom of Christ the Lord, in its successive stages and heavenly glories."

> "Does the word of God (asks Mr. BIRKS) distinctly reveal to us a time when the number of mankind shall be *complete*, and a close put for ever to *the course of human generations?* Or, does it unfold the prospect of *successive generations of the redeemed throughout the course of the ages to come?* It has appeared already, that the latest prophecy of Scripture encourages, rather than forbids, the latter view. . . . . No one could infer from these parts of the inspired volume [the Old Testament], that there was *any* final bound assigned to the course of human generations. The direct statements of their perpetual continuance are so numerous, and expressed in such varied forms, that nothing less than the clearest evidence in other parts of revelation can warrant us in restricting them to a narrower sense. . . . The last fire is, in the book of Revelation, seen to fall on the rebels who compass the beloved city. But the camp of the saints itself is preserved, the fire harms it not. The dead, then, and the dead only, so far as that prophecy reveals, are summoned in judgment, but the faithful who are then living are passed by in silence; and the natural conclusion seems to be, that from them the new earth is peopled with holy and righteous generations." *

In the newly published Lent Lectures (for 1849), the same views are repeated, in a modest and sweet spirit, by Mr. BROCK.† But as he refers his readers to Mr. Birks and Mr. Bickersteth for a fuller treatment of the subject, I pass from him to give one more extract from the other side of the Atlantic.

I refer to Mr. LORD's "Exposition of the Apocalypse."‡

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* The Four Prophetic Empires, and the Kingdom of the Messiah. By the Rev. T. R. Birks, pp. 310, 311, 319, 320, 325. Second Edition, 1845.

† The Priest upon his Throne, Lect. x.

‡ New York, 1847. A work of considerable acuteness and reading, though giving a prominence to the *Voluntary Question*, as an element of interpretation, which most of my readers would deem extravagant, and too confident in its tone throughout.

"The annunciation (says the author) that he who sent his angel to testify these things in the churches is Jesus, . . . that the Spirit and the bride say, Come, and that whoever hears it is to say, Come, is marked by a beauty and grandeur of meaning scarcely surpassed in any other passage of the book. As the saints, who are the bride, do not in their intermediate state address men, the invitation they utter is to be referred to their reign with Christ on earth, when they are to exercise the office of kings and priests. The passage indicates an agency, therefore, they are to exert *throughout the interminable ages of redemption.* The Root and the Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star, is the incarnate Word, who is to reign and CARRY ON THE WORK OF SALVATION FOR EVER AND EVER. THE SPIRIT IS TO CONTINUE HIS RENEWING AND SANCTIFYING INFLUENCE, and say to *the sons and daughters of the race, as they are summoned* FROM AGE TO AGE *into existence*, Come. The raised and transfigured saints are to repeat the call THROUGH THE FLIGHT OF EVERLASTING YEARS,* and the unglorified also; and every breast be filled and transported with a sense of the infinitude and freeness of the Saviour's grace."—(P. 535.)

I thought that my duty to the truth, and fidelity to the system which I am examining, demanded that these extracts should be given to my readers. And now, what shall I say of such views?

(1.) They are in the last degree *repulsive.* Who can hear of "successive generations" of men *after* the last judgment,—of "sons and daughters of our race summoned into existence through the flight of everlasting years,"—of a "perpetual continuance of the *Church* upon earth," for the purpose of being "trained for heavenly glory" without any end,—of an everlasting birth of *sinful men*, to be saved by grace—implying, of course, THE ETERNAL CONTINUANCE OF SIN, AND ITS INSEPARABLE ACCOMPANIMENTS, on that

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* Compare this with Mr. Bickersteth's "visible economy of oral revelation *from those who reign upon the earth*"—to those who are *reigned over;* p. 113, *supra.*

"new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness:"—who can hear of such things without astonishment, and—is it too much to add—without loathing? I know it may be said, that this *everlasting continuance of sin and misery on the new earth* is repudiated by the writers from whom I quote; inasmuch as they repeatedly tell us that "the people that sojourn on the earth will be *all righteous*" in the most absolute sense. *Mr. Lord*, for example, says this, and so do others. But that is their strange inconsistency. They talk of "the incarnate Word carrying on the work of *salvation* for ever and ever," and in the next breath speak of men on the earth as having *no sin* to be saved from—of "the Spirit continuing his *renewing* and *sanctifying* influence" on the new earth, and anon, as if no renovation and sanctification were needed at all—of "the perpetual continuance of the *Church* upon earth to be trained for heavenly glory," and then, as if men were beyond the need of any such discipline. What can be made of confusion like this?

(2.) The arguments in proof of these views are as far-fetched as the views themselves. What canon of criticism is more self-evident and more universally recognized than this, that terms and phrases, expressive of *perpetuity*, are to be stretched no further than *the known duration of the thing spoken of?*—as when the Jews were commanded to keep such and such of their institutions "throughout their generations by an ordinance for ever," that is, of course, not through all eternity, but throughout the whole duration of their peculiar polity, and no longer. On this familiar principle, all Mr. Bickersteth's and Mr. Birks' passages about "perpetual generations," "thousand generations," "inheriting the land for ever," and such like, admit of the easiest possible explanation. Nor does the greater strength of the language in one place than in another, for which there will always be found some reason, alter the *principle* upon which all such passages are to be explained. As for their interpretation of the glory which Paul ascribes to God "*in the Church* throughout all ages," as if it taught the eternal continuance of a Church-state upon earth after the last judgment, it is only equalled in originality and in value by their two next interpretations—of "*the first-fruits of his creatures*" in James, and "*the spirits of just men made perfect*" in the Hebrews (the last, however, omitted by Mr. Birks).

But the intelligent reader will scarcely, I think, be contented with repudiating such wretched interpretations. He will go on to consider what could ever suggest them to such excellent ministers of Christ. It must have something to recommend it to such men ; and I apprehend that something to be the *gap* otherwise left in the pre-millennial system. That system provides for the saints whom it has to dispose of *before* the millennium. It provides also for the resurrection of the wicked at the *close* of the millennium, in such a way, at least, as will bear to be looked at. But since "*no change upon the living righteous*," *after* the millennium, is expected—no simultaneous transformation of the millions of saints that will be found on the earth after the millennium is over—what can they do with them but just *leave them where they were*—upon earth—and *as they were*—in the flesh—to *all eternity?* Abhorrent though the idea be, I do not see how, without it, or something very like it, the scheme can be gone through with. It is the system, then, of Christ's coming *before* the millennium, which drives sober men into such painful speculations.* Truly it is "a burdensome stone" to all who warmly espouse and resolutely hold by it,—dashing against every truth, and throwing the whole system into disorder. It is a wedge which, once introduced into the Word of God, dislocates it all, and unsettles its every text. One way of clearing all is open, and only one, to *give it up*.

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* I am extremely unwilling to give offence by the use of harsh terms. On this point, however, I believe the language employed in this paragraph will commend itself to all who are not deeply committed to the opinions under investigation.

(3.) If there is to be a *Church-state* upon earth, and, of course, all the processes of salvation of souls after the last judgment, the battle against the *universalists*—which, on the ordinary principles of sound theology, used to be thought an easy one—must be fought over again, and on altogether new ground. We must concede much to them, it seems, which we were used to repudiate. We must not only admit that there will be "an accepted time and day of salvation" throughout all eternity for sinners of mankind, but that there will be "ages," or (as the pre-millennialists interpret that term in the New Testament) *dispensations* or *economies* of grace, distinct from each other, and following each other in succession;—that there will be "ages of ages," nay, that there will be whole "generations of these ages of ages;" insomuch that the apostle, looking through the interminable vista of them, and seeing amidst their endless variety a *Church-state* characterizing them all, ascribes glory to God through Jesus Christ in this ever-changeful, never-ceasing Church upon earth! This is what we must concede, I say, to the universalists, according to Mr. Bickersteth, Mr. Birks, Mr. Lord, &c. What use the universalists make of this doctrine of post-millennial and eternal "ages," is known to every one acquainted with the literature of theology, and may be readily conjectured by those who are not. It is the very life of their system, and the one exegetical plausibility which they are able to urge. And though our esteemed friends may guard their views against universalism, by denying that this

Church-state will be for the benefit of any that have died rejecting a preached gospel, even this does not preclude the notion of a future day of grace being extended to such as have died in heathenism,—a notion which has actually been broached by a few of the bolder pre-millennialists. And when once this awfully perilous door has with rash hand been opened, it will not be found so easy a thing to get it shut again.

We have thus seen that our friends make no provision at all for the resurrection or transformation of those who live during the millennium,—that though they draft them, one by one interminably, into the glorified state, they do not pretend to show any *revealed arrangements* for effecting so important a change, and have positively no Scripture for removing them from the earth at all, according to their way of interpreting Scripture, but just the presumed necessity of their getting up higher.

Is this like a Scriptural scheme?

I know well how cordially the authors I have referred to, would join with me in branding every thing that savours of universalism. But I think it neither unbecoming nor inappropriate to show the dangerous weapons with which they are playing; and I make bold to ask the reflecting reader, if it be not the placing Christ's second coming *before* the millennium which puts these weapons into his hands?

In opposition to all these speculations, I affirm as follows:

PROPOSITION SIXTH.

WHEN CHRIST COMES, THE WHOLE CHURCH OF GOD WILL BE "MADE ALIVE" AT ONCE—THE DEAD BY RESURRECTION, AND THE LIVING, IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER, BY TRANSFORMATION; THEIR "MORTALITY BEING SWALLOWED UP OF LIFE."

O how firm is the ground we tread on here! What a relief, after the dangerous region we have just been drawn into, and the insecure footing we had in it—to find "our foot standing in an even place," and "our goings established!" Reader, look on this proposition, and on that set up in opposition to it, and say which commends itself most immediately to the devout student of Scripture as "the mind of the Spirit." I think I could peril the whole question upon this appeal.

The proof of this proposition has been given already in our fourth chapter. The same passages which showed the *completeness* of the Church at Christ's coming, proved also *their simultaneous appearance in the glory of the resurrection.* I do not *infer* the one of these from the other—in no case do we need to do this; but the same passages establish both things. In the same passages we find the whole Church of God *present* when Christ comes, and present in the glory of the *resurrection.* Let us just glance at them again, in connexion with the point we are now upon.

The formal subject of our first passage being the *resurrection of believers*, and it being the most comprehensive and systematic statement on the subject to be found in Scripture, let us recur to it.

> "But now (says the apostle) is Christ risen, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. But each (ἕκαστος δε, each party, the Representative and the represented) in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."—(1 Cor. xv. 20–23.)

The point of comparison here between Adam and Christ, as was noticed before, is the connexion between them and their respective constituents. The apostle assumes that

Christ stands in the same *legal* and *vital* relation to those whom he represents, as Adam does to those for whom he stood. As the wages of Adam's sin is death, so the merited reward of Christ's righteousness is life. And the apostle's argument for the resurrection of them that sleep in Jesus is, that as the *death*—soul and body—of all them that stood in Adam has not only been procured in law, but hath actually "passed upon all men, in that all have sinned" in Adam; so the *life*—in body as well as soul—of all them that are Christ's, has not only been absolutely secured in law, but must infallibly "pass upon them all"—the whole represented company—"in that all of them are made the righteousness of God in him." It is not the *death* and *life*, as mere events in men's history, of which the apostle is treating: It is death and life considered as the *reward of merit*, as the *wages paid for work done*, and under the strict operation of law. Nor is it death and life, even in this sense, to each individual for himself and by himself: It is death and life *under a representative constitution*, and altogether within the limits of that constitution; the merit of each of the two Heads taking legal and actual effect upon the entire company represented by them respectively—in the ruin by the one, and rise by the other—in death from the one, and life from the other, body as well as soul.

"But each in his own order." That is, of course, each of the two parties just mentioned—"Christ," and "all who in Christ shall be made alive;" the first fruits, and the subsequent harvest. Here, "they that are Christ's" are undeniably identical with the "all in Christ made alive;" and both expressions clearly denote the whole company represented in Christ as the second Adam, the "Mediator of the new covenant"—all to whom shall ever extend the legal virtue of his obedience. All these are to be made alive at his coming—not some of them then, and the rest—one knows not when; but all *absolutely*, *numerically*, *at once*, "at his coming."

The other passages need no comment—

> "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should *raise it up again at the last day.* And this is the will of Him that sent me, that *every one which seeth the Son, and believeth* on him, may have everlasting life: and I will *raise him up at the last day.*"—(John vi. 39, 40.)
>
> "I pray not for *the world*, but for *them which thou hast given me.*"

Mark the contrast here between "the world" and "them that have been given to Christ by the Father," as one undivided company—

> "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me."—(John xvii. 9, 24.)

The connexion of these passages with the coming of Christ has been sufficiently dwelt on in our fourth chapter, and the all-inclusiveness of the resurrection and glorification spoken of is abundantly evident.

Here, then, I might close this chapter, holding the proof of our proposition to be complete, that all who have been "given to Christ by the Father" shall appear together, in the glory of the resurrection, at his coming.

But there is one plausible *objection* to which I must advert; otherwise entire satisfaction might not be felt. Passages of Scripture are adduced which—it is alleged—connect the *resurrection of believers* with events confessedly *millennial;* showing that there will be believing men living in the flesh, and an earthly state, *after* that resurrection of believers which those passages speak of. Such, for example, is Isa. lxv. 17, undoubtedly referred to in 2 Pet.

iii. 13, as predicting the renovating of the heavens and the earth; and such are Isa. xxv. 8, and Hos. xiii. 14—both quoted in 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55, the one as "brought to pass" in the Church's resurrection, and the other as a song of triumph because of the same event; both, too, furnishing the language in which the celestial glory of the Church is, in Rev. xxi. 4, described.

The argument from these passages is stated in very much the same way by almost all defenders of the pre-millennial advent. I shall give a sentence or two from the most recent one that has appeared, and the rather as it is directed against myself.

> "The testimony of Isa. xxv. 8 (says *Mr. H. Bonar*) in favour of a pre-millennial advent, is very strong; for it makes resurrection *antecedent* to Israel's earthly blessedness and glory. It is, moreover, one of a series occurring in this prophet, all of which occur in the same position and connexion, establishing the priority of resurrection to the triumphs of the latter day." Speaking of Isa. xxv. 8, he says, "I cannot imagine any passage, or series of passages, more clear and conclusive in favour of the pre-millennial advent. Their order runs thus:—Destruction of Antichrist; Resurrection of the Just; Restoration of Israel." *

Now, let the reader observe the singular theory on which this is made out—the novel principle of interpretation on which these conclusions are founded. It is, that in the prophecies founded on there are *two distinct parties* spoken of, and two quite different states of things. There are *men in the flesh*, and there are *men in glory*—the latter the *ruling* men, the former the men *ruled* over. The subject-matter of the prophecies in question is the millennial kingdom, in two distinct and contemporaneous departments, it seems—the one a *celestial*, the other a *terrestrial* department; there is an *upper*, and there is a *lower* sphere—a *mortal* and an *immortal* class, COEXISTENT and CONTEMPORANEOUS, in these prophetic passages. Thus, in Isa. xxv. 7: "He will destroy the veil that is spread over all nations"—that means the millennial nations, the men in the flesh. But the very next words (verse 8), "He will swallow up death in victory"—that means not the same men, at the same, or at more advanced stage of their redemption, but risen men contemporaneous with, and holding rule over, these millennial, unglorified, mortal men.

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* "The Coming and Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ," pp. 175, 177 (1849.)

Mr. Elliott's statement, to the same effect, may be seen in his *Hor. Apoc.* iv. 202 (second edition); and Dr. M'Neile's, in his "Sermons on the Second Advent," No. III.

Need I appeal to any ordinary reader of the Bible, whether he ever saw or imagined such a distinction in the passages referred to? There is not a trace of this twofold condition of the Church—an upper and a lower, a mortal and an immortal, a terrestrial and a celestial, one of grace and one of glory—coexistent and contemporaneous—in the prophetic strains. There may, indeed, be some difficulty in ascertaining the *scientific principle* on which strains, so catholic and all-embracing in their sweep, are to be dealt with—how predictions, inclosing THE WHOLE WORK OF MESSIAH AND ALL ITS RESULTS, are to be expounded—how the events of all time, as they stand connected with Christ—held forth before the eye at one view on the panoramic canvass of Old Testament prophecy—are to be resolved and sorted. I say, there may be some difficulty about the proper way of expounding such remarkable portions of divine truth. To this point I will presently advert in the *Supplementary Remarks*. But these I purposely throw into a place by themselves, that the reader may not be diverted from the one thing on which this argument hinges, namely, *the presence of two distinct bodies of men* in these prophecies. If this be not made out, then the plea from these prophecies for a millennial state *after* the resurrection of saints, vanishes at once.

Now let the reader glance at any one of the predictions in question, and see if he can find this alleged *twofoldness* in the Church spoken of. In Isa. xxv. 6–8, for example, it is *one* class of men (they would tell us) for whom the "feast of fat things is made;" the *same* from whom "the vail" of ignorance is taken away; a *different* class in whose persons "death is swallowed up in victory;" and again the former class, whose "tears are wiped away" and whose "rebuke is removed from off all the earth?" Was ever such a way of explaining the prophecies thought of by unbiased readers? Did ever critic or commentator, worthy of the name, commit himself to such capricious principles of exposition? *Never one* to my knowledge.

I dismiss this argument, then, as having nothing to support it. That the *resurrection*, and the *new heavens and new earth*, are *truly predicted* in the prophecies in question, I grant most readily, and that it is by no *accommodation* of them that the apostles Paul and Peter quote them in this sense. I grant, too, that the *millennial* state is held forth in the same prophecies:—in short, that the kingdom of Christ *in all its stages* is there. In this all orthodox interpreters agree. If they differ, it is merely, as I have expressed it, in the scientific principle on which the *common result* should be brought out But while all agree thus far, the pre-millennialists stand alone—seeing what none but themselves will ever be persuaded is to be seen in these prophecies—some of the clauses of these prophecies realised in men walking the earth in flesh and blood, and other clauses of the same prophecies accomplished at the same time in men beyond the reach of mortality. And this mere assertion—capricious and unsustained—is the whole ground of their argument for a millennial state after the resurrection of the saints.

Thus, then, the evidence of Scripture for the vivification of the whole Church of God at once, is conclusive, and there is none against it.

SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS.

I have said that orthodox commentators, in expounding the prophecies which are quoted in the New Testament, while agreeing generally in their results. differ somewhat in their way of bringing them out. On this subject I dwelt at some length in my former edition (at disproportionate length, perhaps. from the interest I felt in it as a critical question.) Mr. H. Bonar, in his "Examination" of my book, has handled this part of it in a strain which, on reflection, he will probably regret, as I am sure that he did not mean to misrepresent my sentiments and misquote my words. The point of criticism is an interesting one, and with this only will I trouble the reader for a few moments.

When the apostles quote the Old Testament prophecies as foretelling the resurrection, the new heaven and new earth, &c., it is taken for granted on all hands that they give the true sense of them—that they do not *accommodate* them, as the neologians affirm, from a true to a false sense, a sense which they do not and cannot legitimately bear. I say, this is taken for granted on all hands by those who feel any difficulty on the point: Those who believe in *accommodation*, have no difficulties—they make short work of it. But seeing the prophet, in the same passage where these *final* and *perfect* things are predicted, introduces things neither final nor perfect, as parts of one and the same picture of the kingdom of Christ—how is this to be explained? That is the question on which commentators somewhat differ. Prebendary Lowth, for example, supposing that the physical renovation of the heavens and the earth is not only truly predicted in Isa. lxv. 17, because Peter says so (2 Pet. iii. 13), but is the prominent idea of renovation in the passage, is led to apply the next verse of the prophecy to the same *heavenly* state:

> "But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold I create *Jerusalem* a rejoicing, and *her people* a joy.—(Verse 18.) "This," says that sensible expositor, "may be best expounded by the New Jerusalem, which shall 'come down from God,' when the new heavens and earth are created.—See Rev. xxi. 1, 2, and compare chapter lxvi. 22, where 'there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, nor pain,' ibid. verse 4, and the following verse here."

Others reverse this method; and conceiving that "the creation of Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy" (v. 18), relates not so directly to the *heavenly* as to the *earthly* Jerusalem, they are disposed to extend the same view to the foregoing verse, making "the new heavens and new earth" which God was to "create" (v. 17,) to be a *moral* rather than a *physical* creation.

> "The apostles, Peter and John (says Scott, on vv. 17–19), use the expression 'new heavens and a new earth' for the heavenly state, after the end of the world and the day of judgment; and St. Peter says, that 'we look for it *according to his promise*,' which may refer to this very passage: *yet the context requires us to interpret the words*, in this place, *of that state of the Church on earth* which shall most resemble the world of glory, in knowledge, holiness, and felicity, and which will terminate in it By the new creating power of God, the circumstances of the Church, and the character of men, shall be so altered that it will appear as entirely a new world; so that the former confusions, iniquities, and miseries of the human race shall be no more remembered or renewed. The servants of God are therefore commanded to rejoice in this new state of things, which he was about to create;

for he would make Jerusalem (the true Church) and all her inhabitants joyful, and a joy to all around them; nay, he would rejoice in them, and put a final end to all their sorrows and complaints."

Calvin, with his usual judgment, avoids both these extremes. He sees in it fundamentally an announcement of that new creation of which Christ is the author, and his work in the flesh is the grand foundation; he sees it realized, when "if any man be in Christ there is a new creation" (καινη κτισις, 2 Cor. v. 17); he sees it realized in every new face which the Gospel puts upon human affairs and human society; and he sees it realized in its highest and most perfect sense, only at Christ's second coming, "when the heavens and the earth shall be wholly renewed and be brought into a perfect state. And hence it appears (he adds), as we have often observed, that the prophet has respect to *the whole kingdom of Christ, even to the final goal* which is termed accordingly the day of renovation and restitution." *

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* His metaphoris (v. 17) promittit insignem rerum mutationem, ac si diceret Deus, sibi in animo esse, atque etiam in manu, non modo restituere Ecclesiam suam, sed ita restituere ut novam vitam obtinere, atque in novo mundo habitare videatur. Hyperbolicæ sunt hæ locutiones, sed non potuit aliter exprimi tanti beneficii magnitudo, quod adventu Christi exhibendum erat. Nec vero de primo tantum adventu intelligit, sed de universo regno, quod ad extremum usque adventum protendi debet: sicuti jam aliis locis dictum est. Itaque per Christum mundus quodammodo renovatur: unde etiam Apostolus ad Hebr. Sæculum novum appellat; nec dubium quin hanc Prophetæ sententiam spectârit. . . . . . Atque nos etiamnum in cursu sumus; *nec ista complebuntur usque ad resurrectionem ultimam, quæ nobis velut meta* constituta est. . . . . Meminerimus hæc in nobis eatenus habere locum quatenus renovati sumus. Sumus autem duntaxat ex parte renovati; *ideoque nondum plane cœlum novum et terram novum cernimus.* Non est igitur mirum mœrores nobis et luctus superesse, quando nondum exuimus omnino veterem hominem, sed multæ adhuc supersunt reliquiæ: novitas autem nobis initium facere debet, quia primum ordinem tene

On the same principle, of what BACON calls the *germinant* accomplishment of prophecy, CALVIN explains Isa. xxv. 6–8, including the words, "He will swallow up death in victory," as "*relating*, without doubt, *to the whole kingdom of Christ.* I say, his whole kingdom (he emphatically adds), embracing not only the commencement, but the consummation and the goal." He conceives that the *immortal* character of the felicity that belongs to the kingdom of Christ is the radical idea in the words, "He will swallow up death in victory"—in contrast with the "temporary and fading" character of all other joys; but such an immortality as will not only survive the death of all that is seen and temporal, but will extend to the whole man, embracing the resurrection of the body and the restitution of this blighted world.*

Now any one who has read what I said upon these prophecies in my former edition, must have seen that this last way of bringing out the sense of them was the one I

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mus, et nostro peccato creaturæ ingemiscunt, et vanitati subjectæ sunt, ut ostendit Paulus. Ubi vero plenissime fuerimus renovati, *cœlum quoque et terra penitus renovabuntur*, *integrumque statum recipient.* Atque hinc colligendum, quod sæpius notavimus, *Prophetam universum Christi regnum* spectare, usque ad metam ultimam, quæ etiam dies renovationis et instaurationis appellatur.—(*In Isa. Comm.* ad loc.)

* In summâ, promittit solidam fœlicitatem futuram sub Christi regno, quod ut melius exprimat, utitur variis figuris apte ad rem ipsam accommodatis. Vera est ista fœlicitas, non temporaria aut caduca, quam nec mors ipsa adimere potest; quia in rebus lætissimis defectus hic non parum lætitiam minuit, si desit immortalitas. Duo igitur conjungit, quæ fœlicitatem *perfectam* et *absolutam* reddunt: primum, quod perpetua sit vita (nam iis qui beati alioqui sunt ad tempus, interire miserum est) deinde, vita hæc gaudio conjuncta est; nam alioqui mœstæ et ærumnosæ vitæ mors videtur præferenda. . . . Sed quæri potest, ad quod tempus referendæ sint istæ promissiones? nam in hoc mundo conflictandum nobiscum variis ærumnis, assidueque pugnandum est: nec tantum destinati sumus morti, sed quotidie morimur. . . . Ubi igitur, aut quando, hæc locum habent? *Haud dubie ad universum Christi regnum refer-*

adopted—the one which I thought most consonant with the catholic, all embracing fulness which distinguishes these majestic oracles—the one which, while it admitted of our seeing in them all that the apostles quoted them for, allowed of our seeing *more than that* in them, without in the least displacing or disturbing the other ; that as they embraced " the whole kingdom of Christ, from his first to his second advent" (to use the words of Calvin), there was ample room in them for the *earlier* and the *later* stages to lie peaceably together—the starting-point and " the goal" to be seen in the same prophetic *stadium ;* so that the apostles might select any one of the stages of the kingdom —the *final* one, if it suited the subject they had in hand ; and, quoting the words of the prophecies in question, might say with perfect truth, that " *then* shall be brought to pass the sayings therein written," without thereby *excluding* every other and previous stage of the same kingdom—as if the same words could receive no accomplishment in them, but must necessarily be limited to the one stage and period of the kingdom for which the apostles refer to them. Moreover, in showing how the prophecy in Isa. xxv. 6–8, was to be expounded on this comprehensive principle, and how much we missed by restricting any of its clauses *exclusively* to the resurrection of the body—in expatiating on the fulfilment of it in the stages *prior* to this—I took occasion to say, that " the feast" predicted can mean nothing but the *Salvation of the Gospel*—" made unto all people" properly when it was *prepared* by Christ's work in the flesh, and the universal *invitation* to come to it was

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endà sunt : universum dico ; quia non tantum *initium* spectandum est, sed etiam *complementum* et *meta*. Atque ita usque ad secundum Christi adventum extendi debet, qui propterea dies redemptionis et instaurationis vocatur ; quoniam omnia quæ nunc videntur confusa restituentur in integrum, et novam formam induent.—(*In Isa.* xxv. 8.)

thereupon issued; that the prophet, nevertheless, sees the actual "feasting" of all people at this gospel table, which carries us onwards to the general submission of the nations to Christ, with its saving effects; and that while *this is the stage of the kingdom*—its stage of fullest development upon earth, and the next to its heavenly stage—on which the mind of the Spirit seems chiefly to repose in the swell of this glorious prophecy, yet "there is not one of the terms by which the state of grace is there described, which does not convey underneath it an announcement of the corresponding state of glory; that it is, in fact, the same thing at two different stages of its progress which is described, the one *farther forward* than, and the perfection of the other; and, as Christ's work secured the whole, so all that ever will be is *seminally* contained in the Church's present state, and truly couched under every description of that state."—(Pp. 204, &c.) *

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* Will the reader believe that for thus expounding these prophecies I am classed with *Swedenborg*, in expelling the corporeal to make way for a mere spiritual resurrection, and with *Neologians*, such as *Jaspis*, in charging the apostles with *accommodating* prophecies that mean one thing to a purpose that makes them mean quite another thing?—After showing the application of the prophecy last noticed to those stages of the kingdom that *precede* the resurrection, I spoke of the "delightful sense" of the prediction thus obtained, and "how much we are deprived of by those who, admitting no sense but that of physical resurrection, would carry us straight into the eternal state with these words, over the head of all that is terrestrial in the meaning of them." In this passage I am made to say by Mr. Bonar, that the prophecy "*does not refer to corporeal resuscitation* but to spiritual revival, which he affirms (says Mr. Bonar), to be a *more* delightful meaning than the other."—(Pp. 175, 176.) Mr. Bonar must see that he thus misrepresents me here—I am sure unwittingly—as I made no comparison between any one meaning and another, and still less between a corporeal and a spiritual resuscitation; and that, as they were all "delightful" to me, I grudged being deprived of any of them for the purpose of securing the exclusive place for one of them. Not content with this, when I speak of the *primary* meaning

I have only to add, in concluding these supplementary remarks, that Professor *Alexander* takes the same comprehensive view of the prophecies which have engaged our attention, in his recent and valuable Commentary on "The Earlier and Later Prophecies of Isaiah."

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of a prophecy, Mr. Bonar charges me with making the secondary one "*subordinate*," and so disparaging the apostles, in their quotations of them.—(P. 181, note.) This is something new. If I say of the 41st Psalm, for example, that it has a *primary* reference to David, and to Ahithophel, who "ate of his bread and lifted up his heel against him," do I mean that its reference to Christ and the traitor Judas is *subordinate?* No, but *secondary.* It is the difference between *first* and *next* in point of *time*, as every one acquainted with the language of theology knows. "Not as if this secondary sense," says Prebendary Lowth, "were *less principally intended* by the prophets, but rather with respect to the *time*, because it is *the last or ultimate completion of their predictions*."—(Preface to Commentary on the Prophets.)

CHAPTER IX.

RESURRECTION OF ALL THE WICKED AT THE COMING OF CHRIST.

I HAVE shown that the whole Church of God will be simultaneously "made alive" at the second advent. I now proceed to show, that at the same time a like process shall pass upon the opposite class.

PROPOSITION SEVENTH:

ALL THE WICKED WILL RISE FROM THE DEAD, OR BE "MADE ALIVE," AT THE COMING OF CHRIST.

In establishing this, let us first observe the arguments which have been brought to prove two separate resurrections, the one at the *beginning*, and the other at the *end* of the millennium.

And here, one cannot but be struck, at the outset, with the *character* and the *amount* of the evidence offered us in proof of such a position. One direct intimation of a "first resurrection," and one only, is alleged to exist. And where is that one plain statement? In confessedly the most *difficult* book of Scripture, the most *symbolical* in its structure and *figurative* in its style, and, I may add, in that part of the book on the precise *sense* of which there has been, perhaps, the greatest diversity of opinion. Additional evidence is, indeed, alleged to exist in favour of a first resurrection, though only, it is admitted, *confirmatory*, and but for the plain revelation of it in this one passage, scarcely sufficient to rely on. As Mr. Bickersteth somewhere says, "This (in the book of Revelation) is the *seat* of the doctrine."

Hear their own estimate of the character and amount of the evidence they have to offer us for a "first resurrection."

"But the first resurrection," says the candid and acute *Mr. Birks*, "offers a still severer trial to the faith of the Christian. We cannot here appeal to innumerable texts where it is plainly revealed. The *analogy* of Scriptrue, however decisive in its favour, appears at first sight *obscure and ambiguous.* In maintaining this doctrine, therefore, we have to rest only upon the Word of God, and *chiefly on this one prophecy.*—(Rev. xx.) Why then should a doctrine, *in appearance so disputable and beset with such difficulties*, be now pressed on the attention of the Church? The answer is very plain. Grant for one moment that the doctrine is true, and you must feel that it is one of deep interest to ourselves." *

Of course; but grant what has just been granted as to the evidence for it, and its *truth* cannot but appear suspicious. No doubt, God has a right to reveal truth as he pleases; but we observe God's way of revealing truth to be very different from this. We do not find such grand and delightful, such stirring and influential truths wrapt up in mystic folds, reserved for apocalyptic disclosure, *apparently* negatived by all those passages which we might expect to be the very "seats" of those truths, and only peeping, by their own account, "obscurely and ambiguously" through a few passages and expressions. And we say that this constitutes a *prima facie* presumption, of the strongest nature, against the doctrine of a "first resurrection," literally understood.

Waiving, for the present, the *direct* passage, let us look at those which are thought to *confirm* this expectation. They are of two classes:

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* Lent Lectures, "The Second Coming," &c., pp. 155, 156.

Some, thinking that Mr. Birks has here admitted too much, have tried to show that the doctrine is *directly* expressed elsewhere; but their attempts to show this are the best proof to the contrary.

(1.) Such as, while treating formally of the resurrection of believers, make no mention at all of the resurrection of the wicked—a thing natural, it is alleged, supposing each to have a time of its own, but difficult to account for if both classes rise together. In this class, 1 Cor. xv. and 1 Thess. iv. are usually adduced.

The answer to this is very simple. The wicked are excluded from these passages, not because they will not rise at the same *time* with the righteous, but because they will not rise on the same *principle.* They will not rise as represented by and entitled to life in Christ. When He said to his disciples, "Because I live ye shall live also," he enunciated a principle under which the wicked do not stand, and spoke of a life which they will never taste The *character* of that life, the *grounds* of it, and the *subjects* of it, are all restrictive. What have the wicked to do with a resurrection which Christ secured for his people by his meritorious righteousness, as the second Adam—a resurrection of which his own was the blessed pledge? In such a train of thought as in 1 Cor. xv., the resurrection of the wicked had been out of place. Raised on a different *principle,* they are set aside, and do not once come into view. It would but have clogged and diluted an argument whose force depends on points applicable exclusively to *believers*, to have connected with them the case of the unbelieving, and massed up together the objects of the new covenant and the victims of the old "He that hath the Son *hath life:* he that hath not the Son of God *hath not life.*" "He that believeth on the Son *hath everlasting life:* he that believeth not the Son SHALL NOT SEE LIFE, but the wrath of God abideth on him."—(1 John v. 12; John iii. 36.) When any thing *common to both* is spoken of, such as the *judgment—then* we have the resurrection of both classes at once, as we shall soon see expressed in the most unequivocal terms. But when the subject in hand is something peculiar to believers, the exclusion of the wicked from such passages is just what we expect. It does, indeed, imply that believers rise ALONE, that is, *on a principle peculiar to themselves, and in a company amongst whom the wicked are not found* But it does not imply that no others rise *contemporaneously* with them, that in a company by themselves, and on a principle of their own, the wicked will not rise at the same time.

It may strengthen these remarks, and be interesting to some to know, that the extreme *Socinians* and the Socinianizing party of the *Dutch Remonstrants* employed these very passages to prove—not that the wicked would not rise *at the same time* with the righteous, but that they would not rise *at all.* And how were they answered by orthodox divines? *They were answered precisely as I have answered the pre-millennialists*—by showing that the resurrection treated of in the passages adduced was a resurrection peculiar to believers, with which the wicked have nothing to do.*

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* Enimvero—says MARCKIUS, in an elaborate treatise on "The Expectation of the Future Glory of Jesus Christ"—magis ab adversantibus urgeri solet, quod resuscitatio passim spectetur ut privilegium seu peculiare bonum piorum et fidelium, in quo hinc impii et infideles partem non habeant ullam. [He then refers to Luke xx. 35–37; to Luke xiv. 14, "The resurrection of the just;" to John vi. 39, and xiv. 19, "Because I live ye shall live also;" and to 1 Thess. iv. 14—as the passages on which the adversaries founded.] Verum quam parum adversus fidem nostram obstent ista omnia et similia fortè plura, jam supra audivimus ex Socinianorum quorundam ore proprio; ubi ipsi nobiscum observant, Resuscitationem et Resurrectionem sæpe sumi strictius, pro Beata et læta ad Beatitatem Æternam, *de quâ nemo dubitet quin ista sit piis propria, et ex unione arctissimâ cum Christo unice fluens;* dum heic latiori sensu vocem capimus de qualicunque hominum restitutione ex pulvere in vitam, uti hanc vox illa simpliciter dicit. Eodem modo, quo solemus nos ex Scripturâ Vitam Æternam vindicare solis piis, dum Mortem Æternam tribui-

I have only further to add on these passages, that the reason I have given for the exclusion of the wicked from them, is that which commentators generally assign.* Very sweet, by the way, is the distinction noticed by Bengel—not more distinguished for critical acumen than for grace—when commenting upon these words of the apostle (1 Thess. iv. 14,) "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring *with him*" (because *united to him*). The apostle says Jesus *died*, but believers *sleep*. It is not said that Jesus *slept*. His was another death from his people's. "He *tasted death* for every one" of them (ὑπερ παντος, Heb. ii. 9), that they might *sleep* in Him." †

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mus impiis; neque sic negamus impios revicturos, ut etiam deinde vivere non desinant unquam inter dolores ineffabiles, quidquid optarent. Illud autem inter ista duo est discrimen; quod *Æternam Vitam* nunquam tribuamus impiis, quia illam phrasin nusquam tam late Scriptura usurpat, sed constanter piis, vindicat; &c.—(*Expectatio Gloriæ Futuræ Jesu Christi Illustrata*, Lib. ii. cap. xii. 4.) See also De Moor, *Comm.* xxxiv. § 15. &c.

* Scriptura—says Bengel, on 1 Cor. xv. 22—ubicunque cum fidelibus agit, de ipsorum resurrectione agit primario; 1 Thess. iv. 13, s. de impiorum resurrectione, incidenter.

On verse 23, after saying, as quoted before, that Christians are "a sort of appendix to the First-Fruits," he adds—*Eodem tempore resurgent impii; sed illi non veniunt sub hunc beatum censum.*

"They that are Christ's at his *coming*." Paul (says he) does not call it *the judgment; quia cum fidelibusagit.*

† I am surprised that a man of Mr. Birks' judgment, should say that "the topic of consolation which the apostle suggests" to the Thessalonians here "is *one of priority in time.* 'We who are alive (the apostle says) shall not be beforehand with them that sleep'" (p. 174); and from this raise an argument in favour of a first resurrection of saints in general before that of sinners. The apostle, wishing to assure them that their departed brethren would lose nothing by being in their graves when the time for Christ's coming shall arrive, communicates to them a special revelation which he seems to have had on the subject, namely, that the sleeping portion of Christ's people shall rise before any change passes upon the living; in order that they may be "*caught up together* in the

A good deal of stress seems to be laid on one passage belonging rather to the next class, but to be explained by the principle now stated. I mean,

> Phil. iii. 11: "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

Why, it is asked, should the apostle be so anxious to attain to a *general* resurrection, alike certain to the righteous and the wicked? The simple answer is, It was *not* the general resurrection he was striving to attain to—it was not a resurrection common to both classes. It was a resurrection peculiar to believers,—a resurrection exclusively theirs,—exclusive, however, not in the *time* of it, but in its *nature*, its *accompaniments*, and its *issues*. This is put beyond doubt in the two last verses of the chapter, where all its peculiarity, all that for which it is desired, is made to lie in the thing itself, and not in the time of it:

> "From heaven (says the apostle in his own name, and that of all believers) we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—(Vv. 20, 21.)*

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clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so be (as one body) ever with the Lord." That the analogy of the judgment (Matt. xxv.) and other analogies are in favour of the righteous being first "made alive," and then the wicked, has been I believe universally the mind of the Church. But such a priority of saints to sinners, as of dead to living saints, forms not the slenderest argument, in my judgment, in favour of a thousand years interval between the two.

* Our version, "from whence" (we look, &c.), rightly expresses the adverbial sense of *εξ οὗ*, here. Bengal and others connect it with *πολιτευμα*, because it cannot refer to *ουρανοῖς*. But, as *Winer* (Gramm. of Gr. Test. Idioms) remarks, Eξ *οὗ*, in the usage of the language, has become an adverb, and signifies *unde*, *whence*.—(Amer. Transl. p. 123. 1840.)

The expressive contrast (not so vivid in our version as in the original) between the body of our *humbled* and the body of his *glorified* condition,* points, as do the preceding passages, to the *fontal* character of Christ's resurrection, and stamps the resurrection looked for at Christ's appearing, as one having its cause in the merit, and its character in that of " the First-begotten of the dead." It is *this*, and not the *time* of it,—that limits it of necessity to believers.

But " the word (says Mr Birks) is a compound which occurs here only, and might be rendered ' the peculiar resurrection.' The emphasis is even redoubled,—' the peculiar resurrection, even that from among the dead.' "† That the sentiment of the apostle, in this verse, is an emphatic one—the desire expressed an intense one—is manifest enough ; although, as will be seen in the note below, I do not attach much importance to the mere formula which the apostle here employs to express the resurrection which he longed to reach. He who sees the glory of that resurrection which is held forth as the goal of the " race set before us," will think it "*peculiar*" enough ; but if he be among those who are "striving (αγωνιζεσθε, Luke xiii. 24) to enter in at the strait gate," he will probably think the glory of it lies in something else than a *priority in time.* Certain it is, that critics, quite as much alive to the nicest shades of the apostle's Greek as Mr. Birks, have not detected " the first resurrection" here ; and even BENGEL, though he held a sort of literal first resurrection, makes not the slightest allusion to it. Not content with this criticism, and aware, as would seem, that another interpretation of the verse might be thought quite as natural, Mr. Birks tries to press the context into his favour

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* Το σωμα τ. ταπεινωσεως ἡμῶν—τῷ σωματι τ. δοξης αὐτοῦ.

† If Mr. Birks used the received text (and he gives no intimation to the contrary), this is not correct, the preposition, rendered "from," being not doubled, but merely compounded with the first noun instead of being prefixed to the second (εξαναστασις τῶν νεκρῶν=αναστ. εκ νεκρ., the article being omitted in this latter form). But the preferable reading appears to be the reduplicated form, " *The resurrection that from the dead*" (εξαν. την εκ νεκρῶν).* Though this, however, was originally an emphatic form, it came gradually to be employed even where no emphasis was intended. *Winer* says it "almost uniformly" did so, and he makes this remark in connexion with the passage before us.—(*Gramm.* ut supra, p. 112.)

* *Bengel*, though not clear about it when he published his *Gnomon*, and issued his critical edition of the text, seems to have subsequently admitted it into the second edition of his German version. Since his time this reading has been established.

> " This might (says he) of itself be referred to the momentous difference in the *nature* of the resurrection which he sought. But the context points strongly to the further meaning of a precedence in point of time."

Here one is apt to interrupt the author, and ask himself if he could have read so often that well-known chapter, and failed to perceive what is " strongly pointed to,"—one resurrection prior in time to another. We recur to the chapter, but miss it still. Mr. Birks, however, sees

> " The blessing metaphorically journeying towards the Church. Those who press forward with earnest desire to attain it, meet the heavenly gift *on its way;* while, as for others, it *passes them by*, and leaves them to the prospect of the widely different resurrection then to follow."—(Pp. 175, 176.)

This journey of the first resurrection towards the Church I have not been able to find a trace of in a single metaphor throughout the chapter, nor of any resurrection to follow it.* We see the resurrection Paul aimed at, represented as a "prize"—not advancing to *us*, but held up at the goal as an encouragement to "reach forth unto" *it*; and we hear Paul telling us that he pressed "towards the mark," in order that, when he reached it, he might win the prize. "Of others," we find him merely saying that "their end is destruction;" but how that determines its posteriority to the resurrection of believers, or the time of it all, we are at a loss to conceive.

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* When the apostle speaks of his earnest desire to *attain unto* (**καταντᾷν**, to *arrive at*, to *attain to*, and so to *get possession of*) the resurrection, he does indeed allude to the race which we have to "run that we may obtain." But this is not at all what Mr. Birks sees in the passage.

(2.) It is further alleged, that the resurrection of *believers* is termed a "resurrection *from amongst the dead*" (εκ νεκρῶν), which implies that others—the wicked—will be left in their graves after they rise; while the *general* resurrection is, by a marked distinction, termed the "resurrection *of the dead*" (νεκρῶν or τ. ν.)

Could this distinction be critically established, it would have some weight. But it will not bear an hour's examination of the Greek Testament. I should not even have noticed it, however frequently one meets with it in inferior productions, did not Mr. Birks and Mr. H. Bonar (p. 383), by adopting the translation "from *among* the dead," show that they are not disinclined to build upon it. Now when these brethren apply what they call the resurrection "from among the dead," to the pre-millennial resurrection of *believers*, I presume they apply the other phrase—the resurrection "*of* the dead" to the post-millennial resurrection of the *wicked*: Whereas we find this phrase, "resurrection OF the dead" not only applied expressly to the resurrection of *both classes*,[*] but specifically to that resurrection which is *peculiar to believers*,[†] and even to the resurrection of Christ himself.[‡] I do not find Mr. Elliott committing himself to any argument from these Greek formulas, nor have the best critics seen any indications of a double resurrection in them.

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[*] *Ex. gr.* Acts xxiv. 15. xvii. 32 (compare v. 31, and especially την οικουμενην.)

[†] *Ex. gr.* 1 Cor. xv. 12, 13, 21, 42.

[‡] Mark ix. 9, 10. Acts x. 41, xiii. 34, xxvi. 23. (Gr.) Rom. i. 4. (Gr.)

As to the phrase itself—"from the dead," as it is an exact rendering of the original words, the mere English reader is as competent to decide as the critic is, whether the supplement should be "from (amongst) the dead" or "from (the place of) the dead" [the grave], or "from (the state of) the dead" [ἅδης, שְׁאֹול]. We have here no assistance from classical writers, to whom a resurrection was unknown; and though the phrase had been found, it would not at all have determined in which of the two senses it is used in Scripture. Although, therefore, we cannot affirm that the translation, "from amongst the dead," is critically inadmissible, no more can it be shown to be critically demanded. In other words, this phrase determines nothing, for even its own sense must be determined by what we otherwise know to be the Scripture doctrine of the resurrection.

There is no confirmatory evidence, then, at all. We have gone through it, and found it wanting.

They are shut up, then, to the *direct* passage. If the literal resurrection of the righteous a thousand years before the wicked, be revealed in this celebrated passage, it is not only revealed *here alone*, but it is revealed here—as I shall now show—in direct opposition to the teaching of Scripture every where else.

The following passages are so very plain, that little comment on them is needed.

> Dan. xii. 2, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; SOME TO EVERLASTING LIFE, AND SOME TO SHAME AND EVERLASTING CONTEMPT."

Pre-millennialists make much of this passage in determining the *time* of the second advent. See, they say how plainly the prophet fixes one and the same period for these three things—"the time of unparalleled trouble"—the "deliverance" of the Jewish people (v. 1)—and the "resurrection of the saints" (v. 2). But in their eagerness to fix the time, they pass by what is more important—what, indeed, is fatal to their whole scheme—the events themselves. It is a *literal* resurrection of the righteous, you say, that is here predicted. Yes, but a literal resurrection of *the wicked along with them.* The thing which stands manifestly out on the face of the passage, is the *simultaneousness* of this resurrection of both classes. If the prophecy admit of any primary fulfilment before the period of the literal resurrection, it *must* be such a fulfilment as shall realise this feature of it. If not, and the literal bodily resurrection be the one only thing in the passage, still it must be the resurrection of *both classes at once.**

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* Conceiving that the *time* more immediately in view in this passage was that of the "*deliverance* of Daniel's people" (v. 1), and taking this to mean their future conversion, I applied the whole, in my former edition, *primarily* to that blessed period when—in bright anticipation of "the times of restitution of all things"—"judgment shall be given to the saints of the Most High," and their enemies shall be exposed to never-ending shame and contempt. Other orthodox men, as *Venema* and *Cocceius*, have done the same—only taking the "deliverance of Daniel's people" differently; some understanding it of their deliverance under the Maccabees from the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes; others, of the deliverance of as many of them as were "found written in the book (of life)" at the coming of Christ, and the erection of the Gospel kingdom on the ruins of the old polity. But whether I was right in supposing any such primary reference in the words or not, I never for a moment doubted that the only adequate fulfilment of the prediction will be at the literal resurrection of *both classes* of men.

I am disposed, with *Marckius*, to take the word "*many*" in this passage as equivalent to "the multitude of." This meets the difficulty which *Cocceius* starts,—that though "the many" may be equivalent to

This verse, and the one which follows it, have furnished the language in which the Redeemer himself announces the final resurrection:

John v. 28, 29: "The hour is coming, in the which	Dan. xii. 2:
all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and	"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth
shall come forth;	shall awake;
they that have done good	some
unto the resurrection of life,	to everlasting life,
and they that have done evil	and some
unto the resurrection of damnation."	to shame and everlasting contempt." *

It is hardly possible to conceive a plainer statement of the *simultaneousness* of the resurrection of both classes.

"all," it is not equivalent to "many *of* all."—(See Marckii, *Expect. Glor. Fut. J. Chr.* Lib. ii. cap. xvii. 13. Also De Moor, *Comm.* xxxiv. § 15, pp. 681, 682.)

* Excellent here are the words of Augustin: "Those (says he) who in the one place are said to be 'in their graves,' are in the other place said to 'sleep in the dust of the earth;' and as in the one case they are said to 'come forth,' so in the other to 'awake;' as here, 'those that have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of damnation,' so there, 'some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' Let it not be thought, however, that there is any difference [between the announcement of our Lord and that of the prophet], because the one says, 'All that are in the graves,' while the other says not 'all,' but 'many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth.' For Scripture sometimes puts many for all, as when it is said to Abraham, 'I have made thee a father of many nations;' while in another place it is said, 'In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.' "—(*De. Civ. Dei.,* Lib. xx. cap. xxiii. 2.)

All the commentators and theologians, known to the Church, take this feature of the passage to be so manifest as not to require any illustration. Yet even this can be got over, and the presence of any such feature in the passage, is denied by the pre-millennialists. Of course, they *must* deny it, or give up their scheme. But on what plea do they rest that denial? Why, on the fact that the word "*hour*" here, does not necessarily mean a period of sixty minutes, just as the word "day" means a much longer period than twenty-four hours. The same word "hour," we are reminded, is employed just before (v. 25), to denote the whole period of the gospel dispensation. Why, then, may not this "hour" of the resurrection of "all that are in the graves" denote a period equally long, and embrace "the resurrection of life" at the *beginning*, and "the resurrection of damnation" at the *end* of it? *

That this argument puts a very forced and harsh construction upon our Lord's words, must, I think, be evident to every unbiased mind, even though unable to see the proper answer to it. That answer, however, will readily occur to any one who considers how such phraseology is employed in Scripture, and in common speech. It is quite true that the words "day" and "hour" in Scripture, and in all language, are often equivalent to *time* or *period;* yet always as meaning the *definite* or *fixed* period of the thing spoken. For example, when the apostle says (1 John ii. 12), "Little children, it is the last hour" (or "time," as we render the word ὥρα), he means that this is the last dispensation of grace which the world is to see. In the same sense, another apostle (2 Cor. vi. 2), emphatically says, "Behold, *now* is the accepted *time:* behold, now is the *day* of salvation." So the Lord himself, in the passage referred to, "The *hour* is coming and *now* is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." In all these passages, while a long period is doubtless intended, the *unbroken continuousness* of it, as *the proper time for obtaining salvation*, is essential to the very propriety of the language. Take that element out of it, and the words "hour," "day," "now," and even "time," as applied to the period of grace, cease to have any intelligible meaning.

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* Mr. Birks (Lent Lect. for 1843), p. 181. Mr. Bickersteth (Guide 5th edition), pp. 273, 274, &c., &c.

Now, apply these remarks to the resurrection here announced by our Lord. If it were merely said that "the resurrection of life," and "the resurrection of damnation," are events which it will take a thousand years to *get through with*—that, beginning at the commencement of that period, as the proper "hour" for them, they will go on both together throughout the millennium, and that not till the end of that period shall it be true that "*all* that are in their graves have come forth:" if it were merely said that in this sense the millennium will be the *resurrection-hour*, I should readily admit that the passages adduced as parallel are strictly so. For in that case we should merely have a long continuous "hour" of *resurrection*, even as we have confessedly a long continuous period of *saving grace.* I would even admit, that according to *Tertullian's* idea of the millennial resurrection of the saints—that they will rise, "*some earlier*, *some later*, *within the period of the thousand years*,"* there is nothing positively against it in our Lord's words, provided only "*the resurrection of damnation*" were admitted to go on in the same way throughout the currency of the thousand years — a thing, however, which no pre-millennialist ancient or modern, admits, because fatal to their scheme.

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* Hæc ratio regni terreni, post cujus mille annos, intra quam ætatem concluditur sanctorum resurrectio, pro meritis maturius vel tardius resurgentium, &c.—(*Adr. Marc.* iii. 24.)

But the millennium, as *now* contended for, is in no sense *one unbroken resurrection-hour.* For neither is it said, with Tertullian, that "the resurrection of life" is to go on throughout the whole of it, nor is it admitted by any of them, "that the resurrection of damnation" is to go along with it; but all the righteous are to rise together *before* the millennium, and the wicked are to rise in a body not even at the *end* of the millennium—not within the millennial "hour" at all, therefore,—but *at the end of another period to succeed the millennium;* a period which, though it be called "a little season" (Rev. xx. 3), relatively to "the thousand years," may, according to that way of reckoning, extend over two or three hundred years. To make the words of our Lord agree with such a theory is surely to "wrest" them.

But this is not all. For, says our Lord, In this resurrection-hour, "all that are in the graves shall *hear the voice of the Son of Man*, and shall come forth." Now I think it is universally admitted, that "the voice" which is here said to raise the dead, is the same with that referred to by the apostle to the Corinthians and Thessalonians:

> "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at *the last trump;* for *the trumpet shall sound*, and the dead shall be raised," &c.—(1 Cor xv. 51, 52.)
>
> "The Lord himself shall descend with *a shout*, with *the voice of the archangel*, and with *the trump of God:* and the dead in Christ shall rise first," &c.—(1 Thess. iv. 16.)

That this "voice," "shout," "sound of trumpet," means something more than the mere forth-putting of the *power* which is to raise the dead—that there will be *an audible and mighty sound*—has never, I believe, been questioned.

Well, is this "shout" to be prolonged through a thousand years? Is the trumpet-blast to be kept up all that time? None, I presume, will go this length; and if not, since "the voice of the Son of Man" is expressly said to raise *both classes*—it must either raise them both together, which is the natural sense of our Lord's words, or it must be uttered *twice:* it must sound, that is, before the millennium, to raise the righteous, and, after a silence of more than a thousand years, it must sound again to raise the wicked. Can any thing more unnatural be forced upon the simple and majestic words of our Lord? No: The trumpet-sound is *one.* The two allusions to it in Corinthians and Thessalonians connect it with the resurrection of *believers*, because there the exclusive subject of discourse was "the resurrection of *life;*" while our Lord's words connect it with the resurrection of both kinds and both classes. And thus we have *the simultaneous resurrection of the righteous and the wicked doubly brought out*—all contrary interpretations being clearly inadmissible.

The united force, then, of these two passages in favour of the simultaneous resurrection of the righteous and the wicked, is as strong as it can be conceived to be, and there is nothing alleged against it that can stand a moment's calm investigation.

I said that this passage in Daniel furnishes our Lord with another of his descriptions of the resurrection besides the one just commented on. I refer to the concluding words of the parable of the *Tares.*

Matt. xiii. 43: "Then shall the righteous	Dan. xii. 3: "And they that be wise
Shine forth as (εκλαμψουσιν ὡς)	shall shine as (λαμψουσιν ὡς, lxx.)

The sun	the brightness (λαμπροτης) of the firmament (compare Acts xxvi. 13, "the *brightness of the sun*, λαμπροτητα τ. ἡλιου),
in the kingdom of their Father."	. . . . for ever and ever."

But I shall reserve the remarks I have to make upon this and other testimonies to the simultaneous resurrection of the righteous and the wicked, till I come to treat of *the Judgment.* One passage, however, belonging to this class I must here take up, and with this I shall close the present chapter.

> Rev. xx. 11–15: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before the throne;* and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hades delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

If ever language expressed the doctrine of *a simultaneous and universal resurrection*, surely we have it here. Who would ever imagine that all mankind were not in this august scene, in their resurrection-state, and that himself would not form part of it? But pre-millennialists see none but the

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* So the best MSS.

wicked here, and even of these only such as have lived before the millennium. The plea for this is found in what one would think proved the reverse. "The book of life" is admitted to be the record of the *elect;* and the production of it, we naturally conclude, is an evidence that the elect are in the scene. But the *negative* way in which it is introduced—"*whosoever was* NOT *found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire*"—proves, it is said, that *none* of those who are then judged will have their names in that book,—"that the dead, small and great, who shall then stand before the throne," shall *every one of them* be found among those "*not* written in the book of life," and so be "cast into the lake of fire." That any such sense should be put upon these words, may seem incredible. I will, therefore, let the pre-millennialists here speak for themselves.

"A number of *books* (says *Mr. Dallas* on this passage) are opened; and this is contrasted with the opening of a single *book;* and while it is stated that the dead are judged every man out of those *books*, according to their works, the opening of the other book is for another purpose altogether. *It is not used to call up to judgment any individual whose name is written therein;* but it is employed simply as a testimony to establish the perfect justice of the sentence on *the others;* to manifest that *not one of those who will then be judged had his name written in the book of life.* As the solemn tribunal is sitting for the judging of '*the rest of the dead*,'* we may *suppose* that there will be a reference to this book; and as each individual is accused, we may imagine the question to be asked, 'Is his name in the book of life? Is there any escape for him?' 'No, it is not found there,' will be the answer. 'Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.' This is all which can be grounded upon the mention of this book of life, in this awful passage of God's word. All the dead whose names were in the book of life will have been raised a thousand years before this, and not one shall perish or be again judged; while all the dead will be raised afterwards to a judgment at which *none shall be saved*."*

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* What a liberty does Mr. Dallas take here, in substituting for "*the dead, small and great*," this restrictive clause, "*the rest of the dead*"—a clause occurring not only at a distance of seven verses from this passage, but in a distinct vision (for the expression "I saw" is purposely repeated, v. 4, and v. 11, to show this), and a clause which, instead of being equivalent to the one here employed, is the strongest contrast to it! And yet the same thing is done by *Mr. Birks*, as we shall see.

Mr. Lord, in his "Exposition of the Apocalypse," entitles this passage "*The Resurrection and Judgment of the Unholy Dead.*"

"*All the unholy dead* (he says) *of all ages, are to be the subjects of this resurrection and judgment.* Whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. *And they only are to be its subjects*, manifestly from the representation in the vision of the souls of the saints, that all the holy who die anterior to the millennium are to be raised at its commencement, and reign with Christ throughout that period, and the representation in the next vision, that none are during that period to suffer the infliction of death."†

"Of what nature (asks Mr. Birks) is the resurrection of the rest of the dead [that is, "of *the wicked*," Rev. xx. 5]? The prophecy gives a distinct reply. After the close of the thousand years, we have this impressive description (Rev. xx. 11–15), 'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God,' &c. *These words answer in all respects to the predicted resurrection of the rest of the dead*,—that is, in the sense in which he understands the phrase, of *the wicked alone*."‡

"We would not venture (says *Dr. Hill*) to pronounce it absolutely impossible that the vision of the *great white throne*, and *the books opened*, should be the counterpart of Daniel's vision of the Ancient of Days for the destruction of the fourth monarchy [that is, *before* the millennium].* . . . This interpretation, too, would account for the mention in this place of 'the *book of life*,' which, if the judgment is *post*-millennial, it is not easy to explain [inasmuch as, there being none then whose names are in that book, there would seem to be no use in producing it; and so the mention of it in that case is difficult to be explained.] This interpretation, however, . . . is attended with difficulties apparently insuperable. . . . Assuming, then, that the vision . . . is post-millennial, . . . '*the dead, small and great, that stand before God' are 'the rest of the dead,' as distinguished from* THE DEAD IN CHRIST who rose at 'the first resurrection.' *Their* resurrection . . . is here represented as succeeding the judgment of the devil and of the nations of living men whom he had deceived."

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* "*Second Coming*" (Lent Lect. for 1843), pp. 217, 218

† Expos. of Apoc., pp. 525, 526. (1847.)

‡ "Second Coming" (*ut supra*), pp. 171, 172.

Now, seeing our author found it "not easy to explain the mention of the book of life" on this theory, and as he is not satisfied with the view given of it by other pre-millennialists, it may be right to hear Dr. Hill's one. It certainly is something new.

"The account usually given [by pre-millennialists] of the introduction of this book is, that it was to ascertain that none of the wicked were written in it. It should, however, be remembered, that this book is not described as 'the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' nor yet as 'the book of life from the foundation of the world.'—(Rev. xiii. 8, xvii. 8.) It may then be *another* book, indicating *another kind of salvation*, even of Israel in the flesh, who are saved in 'the beloved city,' like Noah's family in the ark, to be the seed of a new world."†

These specimens may suffice, although I regret that, instead of some of the above, I cannot give the views of authors to whom, possibly, the reader would pay more deference.*

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* This extraordinary theory is the one which the Duke of Manchester supports, which will account for the great difference on many points between him and most of his brethren; though this gives him the advantage over them in enabling him to make it a judgment of *both classes*.

† "Second Coming," &c. (Lent Lect.) pp. 287-291.

And now, will this view of the final resurrection stand for a moment?

(1.) If "*the dead, small and great,*" whom John saw "stand before the throne," mean merely the party styled "*the rest of the dead,*" seven verses before, why was not the same expression retained, or at least one so equivalent to it as to be easily identified with it? Such *loopings* of one clause with another at some distance from it, for the express purpose of showing that they mean the same thing, and relate to the same time, are not only acknowledged by all who have studied this wonderful book to be a common device in it, but constitute one of the *artistic charms* of the book.* But so far is the same, or any thing like an equivalent expression to "the rest of the dead," from being employed here, that probably no reader ever did imagine them to mean the same party without some supposed *necessity* for doing so; nor is it easy to believe that even then this sense is deemed a *natural* one. Certain it is, that all readers, in all countries and at all periods (with hardly an exception worthy of notice,) have understood "the dead, small and great," who were seen "standing before the Throne," as meaning *the whole human race.* How easy would it have been—by some such device as I have noticed—to prevent so great a mistake, if mistake it be! Is there not, then, the strongest reason to conclude that it is *no mistake*; and that the sublime catholicity and transparent simplicity of the language actually used, were expressly intended to convey what *all but every reader* from the beginning has understood it to mean? "If," says *Dr. Hill*, in the lecture already quoted, and I admire his candour—"If it were lawful to consider it, as it has been in past ages considered, a description of *a simultaneous and universal judgment of all that have ever lived*, IT WOULD NOT BE EASY TO FIND WORDS MORE COMPREHENSIVE THAN THESE, '*The dead, small and great, stand before God.*' But as such an interpretation is necessarily precluded by consi-

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* Strange to say, *Mr. Elliott* has not, in his voluminous commentary on the Apocalypse, one word on this passage. He gives the whole chapter in the way he usually does when he designs to illustrate it all. He spends about seventy pages upon the first part of this chapter, and especially "the first resurrection." He argues the literality of that resurrection pretty elaborately, and adverts to what seemed of most weight against it. And yet not even a passing hint have I been able to discover on this passage, except one, indicating that he referred it to the end of the millennium. How is this? Had it no important bearing on the preceding scenes, and on his pre-millennial theory? As the final crisis of this world's affairs, did it not invite special attention? Did not the remarkable language which it employs regarding the *parties*, the *books*, and the *issue*, demand from a commentator so voluminous and minute a formal investigation?

These questions I took the liberty of putting to the author in a letter to him in the *Free Church Magazine* (for Sept. 1846). That letter he was courteous enough to answer pretty fully through the same medium (Nov. 1846), but to these questions he made no reply.

In *Mr. Brooks*' "Elements of Prophetical Interpretation," in which about a thousand passages of Scripture are commented on or referred to, and about forty pages spent expressly on "*The Judgment*," I can find no explicit allusion to this passage, far less any discussion of it. And much the same remark is applicable to *Mr. Bickersteth's* "Guide."

These singular omissions—are they purely accidental?

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* *Ex. gr.*,

Compare Chap.	v. 10	with Chap. xx. 4.
	vi. 9–11	xi. (15—) 17, 18. xix. 2, 6. xx. 4.
	vii. 3, 4	xiv. 1.
	vii. 15	xxi. 3, 4. xx. 3.
	x. 2, 7	xi. 15, 17. xix. 6. xx. 4.
	xi. 2	xiii. 5
	xi. 3	xii. 6, 14.
	xiv. 11	xix. 3, 20.
	xv. 2	xx. 4.

derations already stated, and as the judgment here announced must consequently be *supplementary to a former one*," &c.—(pp. 294, 295, *ut supra*)—that is to say, Dr. Hill interprets the *latter* part of the chapter by the *former*; in other words, he explains a passage about which there has been more *unanimity* in all ages than on almost any other portion of Scripture, by a passage on which there has been more *diversity* than perhaps almost any portion of God's word. Is this reasonable? Yet it is the method taken by nearly all pre-millennialists now.

(2.) The emphatic and reiterated way in which "*the dead*" are mentioned in this passage, precludes any restrictive sense of the term.

First, "The dead, *small and great*." The contrast between the phrase "small and great," as here used, and the same phrase in two other places of this same book, is very striking. Thus: (chap. xi. 18) "That thou shouldest give reward unto

"*Them that fear thy name*, small and great."

And chap. xix. 5: "Praise our God, all

"ye his servants, and

"*Ye that fear him*, both small and great."

In both these passages, the particular *class of persons* intended is carefully pointed out. I do not refer to the words "small and great," as expressive of *universality*. I refer simply to the fact, that in those two places we are expressly told the *party* to whom the "small and great" belonged.* Now, in the passage before us, the only party to whom "the small and great" belong—as far as appears—is "*the dead*." Are we not irresistibly led, then, to conclude that the meaning intended is, THE DEAD—UNIVERSALLY, or at least INDISCRIMINATELY?

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* So, substantially, in the only other passages where the phrase occurs in this book—xiii. 16, xix. 18.

Reserving for a moment the last clause of the verse—"And *the dead* were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works"—which, as I shall immediately show, fixes the resurrection to be of *both classes*,

Observe the next clause: "And *the sea* gave up *the dead* which were in it"—that is, say the pre-millennialists, the *wicked* dead that are in it. Is not this excessively unnatural?

Farther, it is added, "And *death and hades* delivered up *the dead* which were in them." For what purpose this minute specification, if only *one class* of mortal men be meant? I do not see what answer can be given to this question: Whereas, if it mean that *Mortality* itself shall render up its victims—in the most comprehensive sense of that expression—the language is sublimely appropriate.

One other clause remains: "And *death and hades* were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death." The sense of this statement cannot, I conceive, be better expressed than in the words of the poet—

"AND DEATH ITSELF SHALL DIE."

Taking all the clauses together, then, they seem altogether worthy of the subject, supposing them to describe a final, general resurrection of both classes of mankind: Any narrower interpretation, as it has scarcely ever been thought of, so it is unnatural in the extreme.

(3.) What is said in this passage about "*the books*," and that "*other book*," fixes, beyond reasonable doubt, the sense of the whole passage. It is universally agreed that the "opening of the books" here is an allusion to the practice of human tribunals—

> "To show," as *Durham* expresses it, "that the judgment shall be as accurate and particular in the trial, and just in the close, as if all

were registrated and put on record: Nothing shall be missed or mistaken in its circumstances, but things shall be so just in themselves, and so manifested and put beyond all doubt to others, as if an exact register of them had been keeped, and now published. . . . These books are 'opened' in comparison of what they were before, viz. *scaled*, neither was it known what was in them. Now . . . 'nothing is hid which shall not be discovered, even as to others, before men and angels.'"*

Now, as no *previous* judgment, at all resembling this, is mentioned in the Apocalypse, is it not most unnatural to view this as a mere *supplement* to some other judgment—a judgment of *the righteous?* And is it not altogether extravagant to consider these "books," now for the first time "opened," in the august language of this scene, to be a record of nothing but the *materials for condemnation?* As to the "Book of Life," there is happily a very general agreement about the meaning of it. Setting aside AUGUSTIN's strange notion, that it means the book of every one's *life* or history,† and the notion equally wide of the mark, noticed at p. 209, it is all but unanimously understood to denote *the book of God's elect;* and in this sense it is undoubtedly employed four times in this same book, besides twice here.‡ As such, it will be used not as "*the* books" will be—as materials for judgment—but *as the counterpart of the decisions pronounced upon the testimony of those "books."*

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* Comment. on Rev. *ad loc.*

Per libellos—says GROTIUS—intellige acta litis. Per acta autem litis hominum cogitata, dicta, facta.—(*Annott. ad Apoc.*)

† De. Civ. Dei, *Lib.* xx. *cap.* 14.

‡ In ch. iii. 5. xiii. 8. xxi. 7. and xxii. 19.

Marck, whose observations on "the book of life" here are judicious—some of them even touching—refers as parallels to Phil. iv. 3; Heb. xii 23; Luke x. 20; Ps. lxix. 29; Dan. xii. 1; Ezek. xiii. 9; Isa. iv. 3, &c. He should have added Exod. xxxii. 32.

"God does not refer to that book"—says *Augustin*, righting himself apparently from the slip which he had made in the previous chapter, and giving the substance at least of the idea—"God does not refer to that book lest he should err through forgetfulness; but it denotes the predestination of those to whom is to be given eternal life. Nor is it that God is ignorant who these are, and refers to this book that they may know. But rather, His own infallible prescience of them is the book of life, in which they are written, that is, eternally foreknown."*

"This," says *Marck*, "is another book, chiefly because it has regard not to the *actions* [of every man's life], nor to the *principles* [on which these are to be judged of], which is the case with those called 'the books,' but to the *persons* to be judged."†

As "the book of *life*," it is a catalogue of the names of all that are destined to life everlasting; as "the *Lamb's* book of life" (chap xxi. 27), or "the book of life of *the Lamb slain*" (chap. xiii 8), it proclaims the meritorious ground on which alone that life is bestowed: and as having the "names" of all that are in it "*written from the foundation of the world*" (chap. xvii. 8, xiii. 8), it teaches the origin of the choice of each and all of them, in the everlasting electing love of God. When those on the *right hand* find their names all there without one exception, it will tell them in a language not to be mistaken *whence* came that faith and holiness which "*the books*" evidenced them to possess, and they will say, Now we *know* that "God had from the beginning *chosen us to salvation* through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth;" for while the "*Sanctification*" and the "*belief of the truth*" have been evinced by "the books," lo, the "*choice*" of us from everlasting, "through" these, is found in that "other book, the book of life!" "Who, then, hath made us to differ, and what have we that we have not received?" Thus they will for ever feel that they are mere "vessels of mercy before prepared unto glory." But, when those on the *left hand* find not one of their names in the book of life, they will discern therein God's eternal purpose, that they should be left to show what a fallen state is, what a state of wilful and wicked, persevering and determined, rebellion against the God of heaven is—whether in the authority of his law which it will not obey, or in the grace of his Gospel which it refuses to receive; and that what God might righteously have done with all, he resolved to do with *them*, as "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction"—to glorify his justice in their "everlasting destruction from his presence and from the glory of his power." Thus, this "book of life," while it will show that "known unto God were all his works from the beginning of the world," will at the same time "stop every mouth"—the mouths of the righteous from ever boasting, the mouths of the wicked from ever complaining.

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* De Civ. Dei, *Lib.* iii. *cap.* xv.

† Hic liber—says GROTIUS—est velut matricula civium regni cœlestis &c.

If this be a correct view of the object for which the book of life is produced at the last judgment, it of course takes away even the shadow of a plea for limiting it to *the wicked;* though I am far from admitting that there is so much as that. As for the *negative* way in which the book of life is mentioned in the concluding words of the passage—"Whosoever was *not* found written in this book of life was cast into the lake of fire"—the chief difficulty is to persuade one's-self that those who urge it place any reliance on it themselves.*

On the whole, I hesitate not to say of this passage—and of the testimony which it bears to the *simultaneous pre*

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* Compare Matt. xi. 6.

sentation in a resurrection-state, of the whole human race before the great white throne—what AUGUSTIN says of the two following chapters, that "if we deem this obscure, we ought not to seek or find any thing clear in the Holy Scriptures." *—(*De Civ. Dei.* Lib. xx. cap. xvii.)

Other irrefragable testimonies to the same truth will present themselves when we come to the subject of the Judgment.

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* Even pre-millennialists themselves, when their system does not *require* them to limit the subjects of the last judgment, feel all the force of our reasonings upon it. *Mr. Burgh*, for example, thus writes on this subject :—

"If all the saved had been raised previously [to the final resurrection], and 'the dead, small and great'—including all the dead whom 'the sea' and 'death and hades' deliver up—be *only the lost*, wherefore open the book of life to judge them? And if it be said, Merely to show that none of them were entered there, I think verse 15 leads to a different conclusion—'And *whosoever was not found written in the book of life* was cast into the lake of fire;' which surely does not imply that the whole number of those so judged were cast into the lake, and none of them found written in the book." *

Again: "The whole [twentieth chapter of Revelation] closes with the scene of the last and general judgment, where again I think we have proof—both from 'the dead, *small and great*, standing before God' to receive judgment, and from 'the book of life' being one of the books then opened—that *the award of the whole redeemed Church had not been decided so long before as the commencement of the millennium.*" †

* Lect. on Sec. Adv., No. VII., "First Resurrection," &c., pp. 273, 274. Third Edit.

† Lect. on Book of Rev., No. XXII. "The Millennium," p. 367. Fourth Edit.

CHAPTER X.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED: THE MILLENNIAL RESURRECTION—LITERAL OR FIGURATIVE?

We have seen that, by the confession of candid pre-millennialists themselves, there is no *direct* announcement of the literal resurrection of the righteous a thousand years before the wicked—if it be not in the twentieth chapter of the Revelation: We have seen that even *confirmatory* evidence of it there is none—all mention of it, all allusion to it, elsewhere being sought in vain: And finally, we have seen that the very contrary of this—the simultaneous presentation of the whole human race, in a resurrection-state, before the great white throne—is unambiguously announced in Scripture. At the same time, the judgment of distinguished men and acute interpreters in favour of a literal resurrection in this passage, and the confidence with which that sense of it is continually pressed in the present controversy, demand a full and candid investigation of it. This I shall now endeavour to give it. The passage is as follows:—

> Rev. xx. 4–6: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as (οἵτινες) had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they

> lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. [But] The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

It would take whole pages to enumerate the treatises that have been written upon this celebrated passage, and nearly as much space to mention the opinions and speculations to which it has given rise. The one question, however, of any great importance—whether the resurrection here predicted is to be taken in a *literal* or *figurative* sense—may be brought within moderate compass, and determined, I conceive, by ordinary Christian intelligence.

Before entering, however, into the details of a passage like this, it is natural to look at the *presumptions* and *probabilities* of the case, in so far as they lie on the surface, or suggest themselves readily to the mind. We are not, of course, to be swayed by these in opposition to direct and explicit evidence. But in all questions of such a nature as this, it is usual to take a broad view of the case first, and then to inquire how far our general conclusions are or are not borne out by closer and more detailed investigation.

If the question then be,

Was this celebrated passage designed to announce A LITERAL AND GENERAL RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS?

The following appear to me to be strong *primâ facie*

PRESUMPTIONS AGAINST IT.

First It is very strange that the resurrection of the righteous a thousand years before the wicked, if it be a revealed truth, should be directly and explicitly announced in *one* passage only. We are not, indeed, to set limits to

God; but, judging of Him by his way of revealing other truths of equal importance and of kindred nature, we may safely say, that it is not according to his usual method. Still, there *might* be reasons for a deviation in this case; and if we found, scattered up and down the Scripture, hints of a prior resurrection—hints which, though not at all explicit, were yet sufficient to suggest it, or at least were best explained on that theory, and thought by impartial expositors substantially to express it—this might go far to neutralise the presumption against it, arising from its being nowhere directly announced, if not here. But it is not so. Though the resurrection be a theme on which the apostles delighted to expatiate—though the nature of it, the grounds of it, and its connexion in point of time with the coming of Christ be abundantly dwelt on—and though in such passages the *prior* resurrection, if a true doctrine, could hardly miss to have dropped from the apostolic pen—it is altogether wanting as we have seen, and what are alleged to be hints of this doctrine are not so, nor have ever been so regarded by critics and expositors. This, I think, makes the presumption against its being found here very strong. But if to this be added all that points in an *opposite* direction—what the overwhelming majority of the Church have held to be direct, explicit, and indubitable announcements of a simultaneous resurrection of the whole human race—the presumption that a general resurrection of the righteous a thousand years before the wicked, is *not* the true sense of this prophecy, is greatly increased.

Second, If this was to be the chosen place for announcing such a prior resurrection, it is surely reasonable to expect that *a clear and unambiguous revelation of it* would be made. "It was enough," says Mr. Birks, "that one *clear statement* should be given before the inspired volume was closed, which might serve for a key to all the other prophecies, and brighten into fuller and fuller evidence when the time of the fulfilment should be drawing near."—(Pp. 158, 159, *ut supra.*) This is a frank admission, that if "one statement" was to be held "enough," it would require to be a "clear" one. But can this be modestly said in the face of the diversity that prevails upon it? As to those who take the prophecy *figuratively*, it may be said that they differ among themselves, owing to the erroneous figurative sense which they all put upon it. How far they do differ, the reader who is interested in that point may see in the note below.* But do all those who take the prophecy *literally* interpret it alike? By no means. It is true that the early chiliasts seem to have thought that *all* the saints would, sooner or later, partake of the millennial resurrection and reign. But every one who has read their writings will admit, that they show a strong tendency to apply it chiefly to the *martyrs*. Nor can I see how multitudes could have been inflamed, as they are said to have been, with a passion for martyrdom, in hope of thereby

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* Mr. Elliott professes to give "the most famous solutions of the millennial prophecy that have been offered in the Christian Church, from the time of the publication of the Apocalypse down to the time now present;" but his statement is by no means a fair one. It leaves upon his reader's mind an impression not consistent with fact One would think from his summary of opinions, that among the literalists there was *no difference*, and amongst the figuratists *no agreement*. The literal sense of this prophecy is with him one unbroken, harmonious solution of it, and the first in order; while the figurative sense of it is split up into *three*—not three modifications merely, or particular applications, of one figurative sense, but three "most famous solutions," separate and distinct To be just, he should have told his readers that the literal interpretation must also be split up into three solutions; some, as we shall see above, limiting the first resurrection to the *martyrs* (as *Burgh*); others including, along with these, the most eminent *confessors* of the truth in every age (as *Bishop Newton*); while a third and the largest class extend the millennial resurrection to *all the saints.* There might have been no occasion to go into this detail; but if done on the one side, justice demanded its being done also on the other,—if omitted in the one case, in fairness it should have been so in the other. On this being pointed out to him, his reply was singular. "My statement (said he) was professedly a statement of the literal view *as held by the early fathers.* . . . and I must altogether decline mixing up the names of *Mede*, *Newton*, with *the rest.* I should consider the mention of them exceedingly out of place." But why so? On the figurative side, Mr. Elliott is far from stopping at "the early fathers." *Any* modification of the figurative sense—no matter how trivial, nor how late introduced—is "in place," as if to swell the apparent diversity among those who

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take the prophecy figuratively. On this side, *Grotius* and *Hammond; Whitby*, *Vitringa*, and *Faber;* even the "modifications" of *Mr. Gipps* and *Professor Bush*—are all "in place." But on the literal side, the mention of any modification or subdivision is held to be "exceedingly out of place." I cannot understand this partiality. Mr. Elliott pleads "the magnitude of the difference between those whom I would class together," in justification of his making three classes of them instead of one. By all means, provided only it be done upon both sides alike, that the reader may be able to judge for himself on which of the two sides the greatest "magnitude of difference" exists. Every one's opinion on such a point is apt to be influenced by his general views. With regard to the figurative view of the prophecy, the difference is just this: Some take the predicted resuscitation chiefly in a *spiritual* light, and so see in it a glorious era of "life from the dead" in the sense of *vital religion;* while others take it to relate chiefly to the *public* aspects of the Church, and so see in it the Church's elevation out of a depressed, persecuted, and comparatively powerless condition, into a state of freedom, honour, influence, and whatever of an external nature is fitted to aid the development of its spiritual character, and make it, under its living Head, the great regenerator of society, and to the world at large "life from the dead." Of course, these varying aspects of one and the same *new life*, imparted to the Church, will suggest different *periods* for the fulfilment of the prophecy: some dating it, accordingly, from the commencement of the Christian era, and identifying it with the whole dispensation of the Spirit; others identifying it with one or other of the public interpositions on the Church's behalf that have issued, or will yet issue, in her elevation to a freedom and power unknown before—such as the fall of *Judaism* at the destruction of Jerusalem; of *Paganism* at the conversion of Constantine; and of *Popery* and its ally, *Infidelity*, in every form, yet to come. It would be out of place, in this note, to dwell on the unity of idea that pervades these different conceptions of the prophecy. Suffice it to say, that, for myself, I take them to be all constituent elements of one predicted *enlargement of the Church.*

having "part in the first resurrection," if that resurrection was believed to be the portion, not of martyrs only, but of all believers.* Be this as it may, the man who may be called the father of the modern form of pre millennialism, and whose minute study of this particular prophecy entitles him surely to be heard as to the *parties* intended in the prediction—the *subjects* of the millennial resurrection—Joseph Mede, says: "The rising of the *martyrs* is that which is called the first resurrection, being, as it seems, a prerogative to their sufferings above the rest of the dead." And so far was he from finding *all the saints* in this vision, that it was with great difficulty he persuaded himself that any more than the "martyrs," and "confessors equipollent to martyrs," would rise before the last resurrection; and all the length he ever came was to be "inclined *on the whole* to the opinion, that all the righteous will rise *during the course* of the millennial kingdom."†

Bishop Newton calls this first resurrection "a peculiar prerogative of the *martyrs and confessors* above the rest of mankind." But afterwards "the confessors" drop out, as when he says—

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* The following words of Mede here are worthy of notice: "I will say something more, namely, that this opinion of the 'first resurrection' was the true ground and mother of *prayers for the dead*, so anciently received in the Church, which were then conceived after this manner—*Ut partem haberent in resurrectione primâ* (that they might have part in the first resurrection). See *Tertullian*, who first mentions them. The reason was, because this having part in the first resurrection *was not to be common to all, but to be a privilege of some*, namely, of *martyrs*, and *confessors* equipollent to them, if God would so accept them. Moreover, the belief of this prerogative of martyrs, *in resurrectione primâ*, was that which made the Christians of those times so joyously desirous of martyrdom." —(*Works*, p. 771).

† *Alsted*, whose book, "*De mille annis Apocalypt.*" was published before any of Mede's works appeared, restricted the millennial resurrection to the *martyrs*, I believe; and *Durham*, who refers to his work, reports the same· but not being able to procure it, I cannot speak positively.

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"Of all the prophets, St. John is the only one who hath declared particularly, and in express terms, that *the martyrs* shall rise to partake of the felicities of this kingdom."

And again—

"The learned Dodwell hath justly observed, that this belief [in the literal first resurrection] was one principal cause of the fortitude of the primitive Christians; they even coveted *martyrdom*, in hopes of being partakers of the privileges and glories of *the martyrs* in the first resurrection."*

In a word, and coming down to our own day, *Mr. Burgh* says—

"On the *persons* who shall partake of the first resurrection, I confess I find it difficult to agree with the modern expectants of the Lord's advent.† Their opinion, generally speaking, is that *all* the redeemed from the beginning shall then rise to reign with Christ; while I feel constrained rather to acquiesce in an opinion known to have been generally held in the early ages of Christianity, that 'the first resurrection' is *not* general, even as it respects the saved in this dispensation, but *limited to certain from among it*, possessing a qualification to be noticed presently.‡ There are two distinct arguments by which this may be decided; one from the nature and objects of the millennial reign, the other from the express language of Scripture."

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* Dissertations on the Prophecies (on Rev. xx.)

† Thus do many pre-millennialists monopolise to themselves the expectation of the Redeemer's coming.

‡ I have not been able to verify this statement by reference to the early chiliastic fathers. Probably Mr. Burgh gives as their actual belief the impression merely which their language conveys as a whole. But this is hardly fair, in opposition to pretty plain statements extending the first resurrection to believers generally, which may be adduced, for example, from *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, and *Tertullian*—high authority certainly on this point. The truth I believe to be this, that looking at the passage (Rev. xx.) in the light of the persecutions and martyrdoms of their own time, they took it in its natural import as pointing to that very state of things; but when they were expressing their faith and hope on the subject more generally, the restriction of the passage to the martyrs seemed harsh, and thus they were led to extend it to believers generally. Be this however as it may, I have tried in the statement given above of what the early chiliasts held, to set down the result of my own examination of their writings.

On the second of these two arguments, to prove the millennial resurrection a *limited* one, he says: "I do think Rev. xx. must be admitted to be conclusive." He then comments upon it, to show that the parties of saints there specified exclude the notion of their embracing all saints.*

In his "Lectures on the Revelation," a later work than the former, he says—

> "I have revised with care the opinion I gave in the Lectures above referred to [on the Second Advent], that the First Resurrection is *limited to a portion of the redeemed Church*. . . . I have reconsidered this opinion, the more so as I learned that there were not a few who objected to it, who in all the other matters there discussed agreed with me fully; yet I confess the result has been to confirm me more in it. . . . My strongest argument—next to the condition so clearly and frequently expressed, 'IF we shall suffer, we should also reign with him'†—was the passage in the chapter before us (Rev. xx. 4, 5), which is also the clearest and strongest passage in the Scripture on the First Resurrection."‡

I might have added that *Bengel*, early in the last century, and *Moses Stuart* in our own day, take the same *restricted* view of this prophecy—limiting it to the *martyrs*.

These testimonies are. I think, sufficient to show that the passage before us is *not* a clear and unambiguous prophecy of a literal resurrection of the righteous at large a thousand years before the wicked. For while those who see in it a literal resurrection *at all* are a mere handful in opposition to the general voice of the Church, even those who do take it literally are not agreed as to the *parties* intended by it; and of those who conceive it to embrace the righteous at large, some—and the most distinguished—have come to that conclusion with much hesitation, and with great diffidence as to the soundness of that opinion.

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* Lect. on Sec. Adv. No. VII. *ut supra.*—Mr. Burgh, like Bishop Newton, seems disposed to extend the word *martyr* so as to include sufferers for Christ in general. But this appears an after-thought, not coming out of his exposition, and designed to meet, as far as possible the objections which would be taken to his *restricted* view of the passage.

† See on this passage, my own remarks, pp. 93, 94.

‡ Lect. on Rev. No. XXI., *ut supra.*

Should it be said that the difference above noticed, is after all not so great as to throw doubt upon the clearness of the passage, I have just one question to put in reply: *Has there ever been any such diversity of opinion about the subsequent prophecy of the final resurrection?* *That* I call a clear and unambiguous prophecy of the resurrection of all the righteous and wicked at once, and in proof of this I appeal to the all but universal voice of the Church. Has there ever been any testimony approaching to this, either in amount or harmony, in favour of the literal sense of the *millennial* prophecy? No, there has not. This, then, is my *second* presumption against it. It would be unreasonable to insist that every testimony in favour of a truth should be equally explicit. But if we are reduced to *one* direct testimony, as we are here, in favour of a literal millennial resurrection, it *is* reasonable to require that it be unequivocal; and because it is not, as I have shown, I think this circumstance must be set down among the presumptions against the literal sense.

Third. If a resurrection of *the righteous in general*—as contra-distinguished from the wicked—be the true sense of this prophecy, the description is very unlike the thing to be described. It is not in the least like any other description of that event in the New Testament. Every other description of the resurrection and glory of the saints as such is *catholic* in its character, while this is *limited*—

even laboriously so. Let me request the reader to run his eye over the few following specimens of the usual language of Scripture on this subject:

> "But *the righteous* into life eternal."—(Matt. xxv. 46.)
>
> "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; *they that have done good*, unto the resurrection of life."—(John v. 28, 29.)
>
> "*Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood*, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."—(John iv. 54.)
>
> "To *them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality*, eternal life."—(Rom. ii. 7.)
>
> "*They that are Christ's* at his coming."—(1 Cor. xv. 23.)
>
> "Who shall change our vile body [*whose conversation is in heaven*]."—(Phil. iii. 20, 21.)
>
> "He shall come to be glorified in *his saints*, and admired in *all them that believe*."—(2 Thess. i. 10.)
>
> "Our gathering together unto Him."—(Chap. ii. 1.)
>
> "*To them that look for him* shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."—(Heb. ix. 28.)
>
> "An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for *you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.* . . . The grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."—(1 Pet. i. 4, 5, 13.)
>
> "And now, little children, *abide in him;* that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. . . . . It doth not appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—(1 John ii. 28, 29; iii. 2.)
>
> "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before the throne. . . . . and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—(Rev. xx. 12, 15.)

Now, compare with this catholic and transparent style the description here given of the subjects of this millennial resurrection, and say if it is natural to suppose that they are the same class of persons—the righteous at large.

> "And I saw the souls of *them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands;* and they lived," &c.

I shall by and by analyse this description, and show how studiously limited it is to one particular class of saints. At present, I take it as it strikes one on first reading it; and I have just to ask whether it be natural to think that this is neither more nor less than a description of "the righteous" "entering into life eternal"—of "them that have done good" "coming forth unto the resurrection of life"—of "those who have eaten Christ's flesh and drunk his blood raised up at the last day"—in short, of our universal "gathering together unto him?" *If it be so*, I can only say as before, that the description is singularly unlike the thing to be described—not in the least fitted to suggest it, and wholly unlike all other descriptions of the same thing. This, then, is a third presumption, that a literal millennial resurrection of the Church of God is *not* the true sense of this prophecy.

These presumptions—and more that might be mentioned—against the literal sense of the millennial prophecy, though they are far from superseding the necessity of examining the passage itself, are more than sufficient to neutralise any supposed presumptions on the other side.

In now coming to the examination of the passage in detail, I will first disencumber myself of some arguments in favour of the figurative sense, which I believe to be untenable.

It is frequently urged, for example, that because "*souls*" (ψυχαι) were seen in this vision, and no mention is made of *bodies*, it cannot be a bodily resurrection that is meant.* But this is to mistake what the apostle saw in the vision. He did not see a *resurrection of souls.*† He saw "the souls of them that were slain;" that is, he had a vision of the martyrs themselves in the state of the dead—*after* they were slain, and just *before* their resurrection. Then he saw them rise: "They lived"—not their souls, but *themselves.* All figurative resurrections in Scripture are couched in the language of literal ones; and why should this be any exception?

Again it has been argued, that because no mention is made of *the earth* in this prophecy, a literal resurrection to reign on the earth is not the sense of it.‡ But nothing, I think, can be clearer, than that the earth is the theatre of the millennial reign;—that having "destroyed them that destroyed (or corrupted, διαφθειροντας) *the earth*," he is now giving it into the hands of those who will possess it for the Lord;—that it is just what Daniel saw, "the giving of the kingdom and dominion of the greatness of the kingdom, *under the whole heaven*, to the people of the saints of the Most High" (Dan. vii. 27); or what the elders were heard anticipating in song, "We shall reign on the earth" (Rev. v. 10). Whether this reign be literal or figurative, *the earth* is without doubt the place of it.

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* "It is unaccountable," says *Scott*, "that 'the *souls*' of the persons raised should be exclusively mentioned, if the literal resurrection of their *bodies* was meant: for this rather implies, according to the enigmatical style of the book, that their *bodies* re-animated other *bodies;* that is, they appeared to live again in Christians of the same spirit."—(*Comm.* in loco.)

"On looking at the passage," says *Dr. Hamilton*, "with our own eyes, we can discover no *body* in it at all. The apostle tells us positively that he saw the 'SOULS,' &c. [The capitals are the author's own.] In vain shall we explore the whole New Testament to find the word *souls* applied either to the subjects of the resurrection, or to glorified persons of believers."—*Mod. Millen.*, pp. 203, 204.)

The answer sometimes given to this argument by pre-millennialists is as bad as itself; namely, that the word *soul* in Scripture often denotes the *life* of a person, or *himself.* This is true enough, but is nothing to the point; because what the apostle saw was not "*souls*" merely, but "the *souls of*" certain persons—which can be nothing but their *disembodied spirits.* The literalists have a better way of meeting what is brought against them from the word "*souls*" than this.

† "I cannot see," says *Scott*, "how the resurrection of *souls* can literally mean the resurrection of bodies." The worthy man has here made his own difficulty, for it is not in the vision.

‡ *Dr. Ash*, in some sensible and judicious Lectures on the Apocalypse, urges this—(Four Lect. on the Apoc. delivered in the spring of 1848,

Once more, it has been said, that because the word "*resurrection*" is sometimes used in Scripture to denote the life of the soul in its disembodied state, there is no reason why it should not be so taken here. Thus *Dr. Ash* and others. *Mr Gipps*, in his able "Treatise on the First Resurrection," though he does not go this length, recounts the various senses in which the word "resurrection" may be taken in Scripture, to show that we are not *compelled*, by the mere use of the word, to understand it literally here. I am not aware that any one has been so unreasonable as to say this; nor can I see what is gained by such criticism. It is impossible to deny that the word here denotes the *restoring of life to the dead;* and as such language is, beyond all contradiction, employed in Scripture to express a figurative resuscitation as well as a bodily resurrection, the only question ought to be, In which of the two senses is it employed here? To that question, then, let us now address ourselves. There appear to me, then, to be

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p. 87.) On the same ground, *Piscator*, *Dr. Henry More*, *Bengel*, and others long ago, while they took the millennial resurrection to be literal, made the place of their reign with Christ to be not *earth* but *heaven*. So also *Moses Stuart* now.

NINE INTERNAL EVIDENCES THAT THE MILLENNIAL RESURRECTION IS NOT LITERAL, BUT FIGURATIVE.

I. If "the first resurrection" mean rising from the grave in *immortal* and *glorified bodies*, we do not need the assurance, that "*on such the second death hath no power*" (v. 6.), or in other words, that they *shall not perish everlastingly*. Can it be believed that the Spirit of God means nothing more than such a truism? But only suppose that the first resurrection is a glorious state of the Church *on earth*, and in its *mortal* state,—that those who live during that period—a period of "life from the dead" as never before—shall be "men of like passions with ourselves," having to walk like us in "the narrow way," to struggle with corruption as we have, and like us to "lay hold on eternal life,"—take it thus, and the promise, that "on such the second death shall have no power," becomes intelligible and highly consolatory.

I think this sense of the words is put beyond reasonable doubt by the fact, that in another part of this same book, where we have the same identical promise, that certain persons "SHALL NOT BE HURT BY THE SECOND DEATH," the promise relates not to *risen* and *glorified* men, but to "him that overcometh" in the struggle for "the crown of life" (Rev. ii. 10, 11). What though, in the millennial era, they will not have to struggle with the *external opposition* which, though seldom long away in previous ages, yet does sometimes cease, and will then be effectually put down? Still, they will have to "overcome;" and the assurance of our prophecy is, that this victorious spirit, as it will be the reigning characteristic of the millennial period, so it will be the bright pledge of immunity from the power of the second death.

II. There are but two alternatives in this prophecy—either to "have part in the first resurrection," or to be under the "power of the second death." "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: *on them* (επι τουτων) the second death hath no power." Into which of these classes are we to put the myriads of men who are to people the earth, in flesh and blood, during the millennium? They have no "part in the first resurrection," if it be a bodily one. Are they given over, then, to "the power of the second death?" But only suppose "the first resurrection" to be a phrase denoting the *character* of the millennial era, as one of prevailing *spiritual life*—bright earnest of life everlasting on that "new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness;" and then the assurance that "on *such* the second death hath no power," becomes a promise that such as possess this character—found in its substance in every renewed man, and constituting the prevailing character of the millennial era—shall not "be hurt of the second death."

III. The express mention of *how long* this "life and reign with Christ" will last, namely, "*a thousand years*," if meant to inform us what a long period of *earthly prosperity* the Church is yet destined to enjoy, is intelligible and cheering. But to say that the *risen* and *glorified* Church is to live and reign with Christ for a period of *a thousand years*, is totally unlike the language of Scripture in every other place. I know what is said in answer to this, but it has no force. The limiting of the life and reign to a thousand years, we are told, has relation not to the risen saints, but only to those over whom they reign, and to the *imperfection* which will continue upon earth till that thousand years be ended. But so says not the text. No mention is made of their reigning over any other class of persons; still less is it said that they reigned only *over them* for a thousand years, but *with Christ* for ever. On the contrary, it is just this *reign of the saints with Christ* that is to last a thousand years. The very thing which every where is said to be unbroken and everlasting ("SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD") is here said—if it be a reign in their glorified state—to be *limited to a thousand years.* Vain are all the attempts made to explain away this, as if the still changeable state of the earth might account for a period being mentioned. For the words of the text fix down the limitation not to the *accidents* but to the *essence* of the reign—telling us that it was their "living and reigning *with Christ*," whatever that means, that lasted a thousand years. And as we are immediately told of a great change for the worse, after the expiry of this period, and during another shorter period called "*a little season*," it is perfectly clear that the "life and reign with Christ," *considered as the characteristic feature of the millennial state*, terminate with the thousand years.* I think this is enough convincingly to show that it is no literal resurrection of the Church of God to be ever with her Lord that is here intended, but the long period of a thousand years' "*life from the dead*," in that figurative sense with which Scripture, in previous portions of it, had made us so familiar.

IV. By making the party that "live and reign with Christ a thousand years" to be the entire Church of God risen from their graves, we are forced to do violence to the whole subsequent context.

Thus, the other or wicked party, styled "*the rest of the dead*," who "lived not again *until* the thousand years were finished," must of course be expected to "live again" in the same bodily sense, "*when* the thousand years are finished."†

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* Least of all can those who believe that there will be a fleshly state to all eternity, over which the glorified will reign, and of course imperfection on earth for ever, assign even a tolerable reason for the emphatic saying, that the risen saints will "reign *with Christ a thousand years*." But the difficulty is nearly as great in any way of it.

† "*Mr. Elliott*, indeed, observes that the expression, '*till* the thou-

But so far from this, we read of no bodily resurrection at all on the expiry of this period. "When the thousand years are finished" (τελεσθῃ), we read that "Satan shall be loosed out of his prison" (v. 7) for a period expressly called "*a little season*" (v. 3). In relation to the thousand years, this may, for aught we know, extend to a century or two. (BENGEL, according to his system of computation, sets it down as a period of *a hundred and eleven years* and a fraction.) Be this as it may, when we consider the work he has to do—"he shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea;" and observe not only the multitudes he collects, but the union and organization effected in this stupendous and appalling confederacy—the last desperate effort of the serpent—"they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city:" In view of this, I think the little season of the enemy's

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sand years were finished,' does not necessarily imply that 'the rest of the dead' would rise immediately on the completion of the thousand years, and cites two passages in proof. [So *Mr. Birks*, "Four Empires," &c., Appendix II.] "We do not dispute this. We hold that a statement to the effect that a particular event shall not take place till after a given time does not necessarily imply that it must take place even then. But when, as here, two things are mentioned together; when their order is stated; when a period is assigned to the first, and the commencement of the second is deferred till the period is fulfilled; and when, after this distinction of times, the first is again brought forward and characterized—it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion, that the two constitute one uninterrupted series, gradational or antithetic, and that the specification of times is exact. Besides, the time till which their living again is deferred, is expressed word for word as the time is till which Satan is bound. Both are—αχρι τελεσθῃ τα χιλια ετη—'till the thousand years shall be fulfilled.' Whence it is but reasonable to infer that there exists an intimate connexion between them."—*British Quarterly Review*, February 1849—"*Modern Millennarianism*," an able article, and on this vision particularly so.

liberty, after the expiry of the thousand years, and compared with that long period of "imprisonment," can hardly be overstretched by extending it to a century or so. Well, *during all this time we read of no bodily resurrection at all.* This post-millennial period is to be filled up with something else than bodily resurrections. It will indeed be employed in the *raising of a wicked party*, but not bodily, from their graves. Where, then, do we read of the bodily resurrection of that party called "the rest of the dead?" *Nowhere.* We go downwards in the chapter to find them, till we come to the account of the last judgment, and there observing that "*the dead, small and great*," are seen "standing before the throne," we are forced to suppose that these "dead small and great," must just be "the rest of the dead," we have been seeking for—otherwise, they never appear again at all. But how very unnatural is this! I have shown already (pp 210, 211) how harsh such a construction is—one which nothing but *necessity* would drive any one to.

But this is not all the violence which the literal sense obliges us to do to the text. For, when once we have made "the dead, small and great, that stand before the throne" at the final judgment to be the same as the "rest of the dead that lived not again until the thousand years were finished," we are forced to exclude the righteous altogether from the last judgment, making "the dead, small and great," to be *every one of them wicked.* This, besides doing the greatest imaginable violence to that august scene, gives no explanation of the "opening of the book of life" on that occasion, except one which I have shown to be wholly inadmissible (pp. 214–216), and I would say absurd—namely, to show that none of those then judged have their names written in it!

Thus, by making the millennial resurrection to be the literal rising again of the whole Church of God out of their graves, we are driven into the harshest interpretations of the subsequent context, and bring out results which no one would otherwise ever think of.

Now, reverse the process. Make the resurrection of both the parties *figurative*—as expressive of the thousand years' *extinction* of the one and *triumph* of the other, with the temporary resurrection of the defeated body and their gigantic death-throes, under the desperate agency of the old serpent before the final ruin of his kingdom—and not only are all the difficulties of the other sense avoided, but a meaning put upon the whole chapter consistent with itself, and entirely accordant with the phraseology of Scripture in other places. In this view of the prophecy, we have *a double representation of both the parties* that have been struggling for the mastery ever since the fall. The party of "the serpent" and that of "the woman's seed" are each of them described both *nakedly* and *symbolically.* Going back to the close of the previous chapter, we read that "the *beast* was taken, and with him the *false prophet*, and cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (xix. 21). This puts an end to the anti-christian kingdom; but it is added, "The remnant"—or "*the rest* (οἱ λοιποι)—were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh" (v. 21). A marked distinction is thus drawn between the doom of "the beast and false prophet," and that of "the rest." The former go to "the lake of fire"—never more to re-appear: The other do not so, but are merely "*slain* with the sword from the *mouth* of Christ." We are prepared, then, for the possibility, at least, of their re-appearance upon the stage. Accordingly we find them, as I shall show, in the fifth verse of the next chapter, under their old name—"*the rest* (οἱ λοιποι) of the dead;" dead, that is, in the same sense in which the other party are meant as dead—in respect of the cause they espouse. In this sense they "live not again (after being 'slain with the sword from Christ's mouth') until the thousand years are finished." Leaving them, then, for the present, a *dead* party, we inquire now what becomes of the other party, so long held down. The twentieth chapter begins with them An angel from heaven lays hold of the devil, binds him a thousand years, shuts and seals him up in the bottomless pit, that he may no more deceive the nations till the thousand years be fulfilled (v. 1-3). The earth is at rest from the plots and seductions of the enemy. His cause is at an end—his kingdom extinguished—and for a thousand years, "*the sovereignty of the world*" *is* "*our Lord's and his Christ's*"* (chap. xi. 18). This same state is next represented symbolically—as a resurrection of the *martyrs*, under both the Pagan and the Papal systems, as I shall by and by show. No one can say that this is an unusual mode of representing *the revival* or *recovery of a cause which for a time was as good as dead.* We have it in Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones. We have it in Paul's prediction of the same event, as "*life from the dead*" (Rom. xi.). We have it in the resurrection of the *slain witnesses* in this same book (ch. xi.).† Nor is the figure less familiar in the current style of writers of every age and nation, to express the *revival* of a *dead* cause.

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* Εγενετο ἡ βασιλεια, κ. τ. λ. "Much more glorious," says BENGEL, "is this primitive reading than that of a hasty transcriber, εγενοντο αἱ βασιλεια, κ. τ. λ. Since then, every critical edition of the text has introduced this "much more glorious" reading. The English I have adopted from *Tregelles.*

† I shall not overlook, in its proper place, the objection made to this, namely, that in none of the cases adduced was the death a *bodily* one, and therefore we do not expect a bodily resurrection; whereas, the martyrs in our prophecy died for Christ in *the body*. I shall show that,

So much, then, for the "*rising* and *reigning*" party in the millennial era. "The Lord alone is exalted in that day;" and "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, is given to the people of the saints of the Most High." As for the *other* party—"the rest of the dead"—they live not again until the thousand years are finished." To use the triumphant language of the prophet, pointing to this same period, "They are *dead*, they shall not *live:* they are *deceased*, they shall not *rise:* To this end hast thou visited them, and made all memory of them to perish" (Isa. xxvi. 14).

But the very hint, "they lived not again *till* the thousand years were finished," is a warning to expect their reappearance at the close of that period Accordingly, though in the sense of a literal resurrection of their bodies we never hear of them again, as I have shown, we find them duly re-produced, as a party, by the old serpent, who is loosed at the close of the millennium for that very purpose. He was to "deceive *the nations* no more till the thousand years were fulfilled," and "when the thousand years were fulfilled," and Satan is loosed, he shall again "go out to deceive *the nations;*" not, of course, the same individuals, but their *successors*, who are spoken of under the same name, as deceived first for long ages, then undeceived for a thousand years, and finally again exposed to deception. Now, this is just the principle on which we interpret the whole of this symbolical prophecy. The men who, from age to age, have adhered to Christ, and whose witness for him has cost them their lives, shall live again in a race of men who for a thousand years are to triumph in their Lord's name over all the power of the enemy. But this by the way. I

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according to our way of taking the prophecy, this objection does not apply. At present, I merely urge the familiarity and expressiveness of the figure.

was saying that Satan reproduces his party—"they *live* again when the thousand years are finished," and in far greater numbers and mightier force than before they were "*slain* with the sword from Christ's mouth;" but, like him in Daniel, "they shall come to their end and none shall help them."

Thus does this famous prophecy, when viewed as *symbolical*, explain naturally from beginning to end; when taken *literally*, however well some expressions may interpret, we cannot get through with it.

V. The next objection to the literal sense of the millennial prophecy I shall give in the words of *Mr. Gipps.*

"The declaration (says he) made in verse 12, concerning the 'opening of the book of life,' at the time when the dead are judged, and the reference made to it in verse 15, convince me that the first resurrection cannot signify the resurrection of the saints at the second coming of Christ. The opening of the book of life (as observed, page 11) appears to me to signify the manifestation of those who are written in it.* Two reasons lead me to conceive that this must take place at the second coming of Christ. *First*, ... It is utterly inconceivable that all this glory [described in Matthew xxv. 31, &c.] can be conferred upon the saints, and such a manifestation of them be made in the presence of Christ and of all the holy angels, of one another, and of all the ungodly living in every part of the earth, *one moment before* what is called *the 'opening of the book of life.'* The very absurdity of the idea would convince me that such a manifestation of the glory of those who are written in the book of life must coincide with, and be the same as 'the opening of that book.' And the expression (v. 15), 'Whosoever was not FOUND written in the book of life,' still farther proves that this is the time when the open discovery or manifestation is made of those who are written therein.—*Secondly*, It is expressly set forth that '*the manifestation of the sons of God*' will take *place at their resurrection*, (Rom. viii. 19, 23.) As, therefore, I am convinced that this manifestation cannot take place before the book of life is opened, in which their names are written, but must be the same as the discovery of those who are written therein, I feel assured that the resurrection of the saints will be at the time of the 'opening of the book of life,' and not at the 'first resurrection.' These two reasons, therefore, prove to my mind that when Christ sits upon the throne of judgment and the book of life is opened, must be the time of his second coming and of the resurrection of the saints."*

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* "We may observe," says the author at page 11, "that the opening of a book or seal appears, in the Revelation, to denote the time when the fulfilment or manifestation of what is written in the book begins. (See ch. vi. 1, 3, &c.) Thus, the opening of 'the books' (v. 12) evidently signifies the open discovery or manifestation of what is written therein; that is, of the 'works' of those who stand before the throne of judgment, (vv. 12, 13.) Hence, the 'opening of the book of life' signifies the *discovery or open manifestation of those who are written therein;* that is, of the saints, Ch. xiii. 8, and xvii. 8. . . . From this, therefore, we collect that the open manifestation of those who are written in the book of life does not take place at the time of the first resurrection, but after the period of the thousand years and the intervening period (7 to 10) are ended, and at the time when the dead are judged.

VI. Another argument against the literal sense may also be expressed in the words of Mr. Gipps—

"The omission of any declaration as to 'the *sea*, *death*, and the *grave* [or *hades*], *giving up the dead*' at the first resurrection, and the making such a declaration respecting 'the dead' in verse 13, convinces me both that 'the first resurrection' is *not that of the saints*, and also, that 'the dead' in verses 12, 13, *include all mankind*, both the saints and the ungodly. In every other part of the Word of God, the information given concerning the resurrection of the saints is not only much more frequent, but also much more explicit, than concerning the resurrection of the ungodly. I feel convinced, therefore, that in this portion also of Scripture, if it were intended to foretel a resurrection of the saints distinct from that of the ungodly, more explicit information would be given concerning the *former* than concerning the *latter*. I find, however, that the information given concerning 'the first resurrection,' instead of being much *more*, is much *less* explicit than that concerning the resurrection intimated in verses 12, 13; for there is not the least allusion to 'the sea, death, and the grave giving up the dead' at the first resurrection, and it is expressly declared that they do this at the time of the resurrection set forth in verses 12, 13. By contrasting this, therefore, with the course pursued in other portions of the word of God, I feel convinced that the first resurrection cannot be that of the saints; and that verses 12, 13, do not describe the resurrection of the ungodly only, but that of the saints also, and include all the dead without any exception."*

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* Treatise on the First Resurrection (1831), pp. 21–23—a work of great modesty, but full of acute verbal criticism; although I think it fails to establish the author's view of the millennial period as one *not future*.

VII. The clause, "*This is the first resurrection*" (v. 5), —which is thought to prove it literal—seems to me, if it prove any thing, to prove the reverse. It is reasonable—say the pre-millennialists—to suppose, that if the second or last resurrection be literal, the first will be so also—differing from the second only *in time.* Unfortunately for this way of reasoning, what is said in the verse immediately following contradicts it: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such *the second death* hath no power" (v. 6). Here "the *first* resurrection" and "the *second* death" are intentionally brought together and contrasted. Is the *first* death, then, of the same nature with the *second?* Does the one merely *precede* the other? No; the first death is that of the *body*, the second that of both *body and soul:* the first death is common to the righteous and the wicked; the second is the everlasting portion of the wicked, and of them alone. To *suffer* the first death for Christ is made the ground (not, of course, the meritorious ground) of *exemption* from the power of the second death. "Be thou faithful unto death," said Christ to the Church of Smyrna, and I will give thee the crown of life. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (ch. ii. 10, 11). Now, as exemption from the power of the second death is here made to rest upon a certain *character*, namely, fidelity to Christ even to death; and in our millennial chapter, exemption from the power of the same second death is made to rest upon *participation in the first resurrection*, is it not reasonable to conclude that this "first resurrection" is meant to signify *a certain character in the present life*, and not the possession of *bodily resurrection and glory?* And what character, but the same spirit of the Smyrnean martyrs—that *faithfulness to Christ* which "made not their lives dear unto them" for his name's sake? What though those that slew *them* are not alive to slay their millennial *successors?* What though the whole persecuting party be extinct then, and shall "live not again till the thousand years be finished?" It is not the actual *laying down of their lives*, so much as the "*faithfulness*" which made the sacrifice, that Christ promises to reward with exemption from the second death; and surely a self-sacrificing fidelity to Christ will not be superfluous during the millennium, merely because, when Christians are ready then to part with themselves and every thing for Christ, there will be nobody to take every thing or any thing from them.

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* First Resurrection, *ut supra*, pp. 20, 21.

To my mind, this view of the first resurrection is put beyond doubt by these following words, "*Blessed* and *holy* is he that hath part in the first resurrection." I cannot see what important information is conveyed by these words, if "the first resurrection" mean a restoration to bodily life. To tell us that saints risen from the dead, and reigning in glorified bodies with Christ are *holy*, seems to me to be very unlike the language of Scripture every where else, and very superfluous. I have already remarked the same thing about the clause that follows: "Over such the second death hath no power." It cannot but appear strange that we should be told that the risen and glorified saints will not perish eternally. But only suppose this "first resurrection" intended to express the *character* of the millennial era, or of the Christians who are privileged to live then, and the language of this verse will not only explain, but be significant in every word of it. The word "*blessed*" will then express the high privilege they enjoy in having their lot cast in such a period. Indeed, the same language is employed by *Daniel* to express the privilege not of bodily resurrection, but of living in the body during this very period. "*Blessed* is he that waiteth, and *cometh to* the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" (Dan. xii. 12). Then, the word "*holy*" in our verse will express the high devotedness and spirituality that will distinguish the Christians of that period, and signalise the millennial day itself above all former periods in the world's history. And lastly, the closing words of the verse—"*over such* the second death hath no power"—will convey the consolatory assurance, that the "*holy*" character of that "*blessed*" era will ensure its genuine possessors of exemption from the second death, and the joyful reception of "the crown of life."*

There are two more arguments against the literal sense which I have reserved to the last, because they spring out of a closer inspection of the millennial prophecy than we have yet had occasion to exercise. The seven foregoing arguments may be said to have been gathered from the *surface* of the passage—the two following, with which I will conclude, are suggested by a narrower observation of the vision.

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* In this view of it, the idea of the verse—a *spiritual* as the earnest of a *bodily* resurrection—is quite familiar in the language of the New Testament. "The hour is coming," says our Lord, "and now is, when the [*spiritually*] dead shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall [*spiritually*] live: marvel not at this, for the hour cometh in which all that are in the *graves* shall hear his voice, and shall come forth [*bodily*]." "My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them [*now*] eternal life, and they shall never *perish* [or die the second death]." "If," says the apostle, "the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus our Lord dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal *bodies* by his Spirit that *dwelleth in you* [your renewed *souls*]."

VIII. It is a fatal objection to the literal sense of this prophecy, as announcing the bodily resurrection of all dead, and the change of all living saints, that it is exclusively a *martyr-scene*—the prophet beholding simply a *resurrection of* THE SLAIN; whereas this very circumstance eminently favors the *figurative* sense.

The vision is described first generally, and then in detail. Two companies also are seen in the vision, and in two successive and opposite conditions—first as *dead and dishonoured*, next as *risen and reigning*. Thus :—

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE VISION.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE VISION.

First Company seen Dead.

"And [I saw] the souls of them that were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God;

Second Company seen Dead.

"And [I saw] such as had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon the forehead, and on the hand:

Both Companies seen Risen and Reigning.

"And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." (v. 4.)

A few remarks on the several clauses of the passage will still further open it up.

"I saw thrones, and *they sat* upon them." Who sat upon them? Not any mentioned as yet, for the vision begins here. Clearly, therefore, it is the two companies immediately after specified. Accordingly, as soon as the prophet has described these, he comes back to his first statement—"And they [those now specified] lived and reigned a thousand years;" as if he had said, "And I saw thrones, and persons sitting on them, to whom judgment was given; and I was made to see who filled the thrones; for I saw the beheaded, &c.. and such as had not worshipped the beast: And *they* lived and reigned—these were they whom I saw in the thrones—and their reign lasted a thousand years." * If this be the construction of the passage, as it clearly is—if the words "*they* sat upon them." mean "they to be presently mentioned"—then we must put no other saints into the vision besides those afterwards specified; and the concluding words, "And *they* (those just specified) lived and reigned," *tie us peremptorily down to those two companies alone.* Who, then, are they? The next two clauses furnish the reply:

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* *Mr. Elliott*, perceiving how much depends upon this point, gives the words another turn, but one that I am convinced is untenable. "Christ and *his saints*," says he, "were seen to take their sitting on thrones of judgment and royalty. St. John specifies particularly, *as if conspicuous among them*, the souls of them that had been beheaded, . . . and others also, whosoever had not worshipped," &c.—(*Hor. Apoc.* iv. 174, sec. edit.) One objection to this is, that it introduces into the vision those who were *not* seen in it, and makes the only parties who *were* seen to be merely "conspicuous among the whole number of Christ's saints." Another objection is, that it obliges us to seek for a nominative to the verb "sat"- the parties that were seen in the thrones—*out of this vision altogether*. Mr. Elliott, in his reply to my letter before referred to, takes the nominative to "*sat*" to be "Christ and his attendant hosts, described at large in the preceding chapter as combatants against, and conquerors over, the beast," &c. That is to say, he takes his nominative out of a perfectly different vision from the one where the verb is; and not only so, but since another vision comes in *between* these two, we have his nominative in the *first* vision and the verb in the *third*, or at least another and quite distinct representation of the same period from the second vision. Could any more unnatural and inadmissible construction be

"And [I saw] the souls of them that were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God." *Beheading*,* a well-known Roman mode of putting to an ignominious death, is mentioned here, merely to denote the *Roman* authority by which they were slain, in the Pagan and unbroken period of the empire. All the martyrs of Jesus, then, under the *Pagan* persecutions are here embraced. The next clause describes another class of martyrs, after this class was completed. But before coming to it, let me request the reader's attention to the following passage, in the sixth chapter of this book, where the same class of martyrs (under *Paganism*) are described in nearly identical terms, and the other class announced as yet to come:

> "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, How long. O Lord,† holy and true,

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proposed? But take the verb (*εκαθισαν*) "they sat," *impersonally*, as equivalent to "they were sate upon"—a usage quite familiar in the Greek Testament and the Septuagint, and the construction of the whole passage becomes transparent.*

* *Πεπελεκισμενων*, from *πελεκυς*, an *axe*.

† *Δεσποτης*, *Master*—having rule over the oppressors equally with the oppressed.

* "Nothing scarcely" (says *Moses Stuart*, who takes the literal sense of our vision) "is more common in the Old Testament and in the New, and especially in the Chaldee of the book of Daniel than to employ the third person plural for the *passive voice*, thus making a kind of impersonal verb of it: Gramm. § 174. Note 2."—(*Comm. on Apoc.* ad loc.) "In the New Testament" (says *Winer*) "verbs are used *impersonally*, in the third person plural." Then follow some examples *Gramm.* § 49.

> dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And a white robe was given unto every one of them;* and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a [little]† season, until both their fellow-servants and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

The persons seen in this vision are unquestionably the same as the first class in our millennial vision; and it is "their souls" that are seen in both cases, or themselves in the state of the dead—as slain for the word of God. In the former vision, however, the apostle *hears* them *asking* "judgment;" in the latter, he *sees* them *get* it. "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not *judge and avenge our blood* on them that dwell on the earth?" is their doleful cry in the one vision: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and *judgment was given unto them*," is the delightful response to that cry which the apostle was privileged to announce in the other. The one, in short, is the petition *presented*, and the other, the petition *granted*. But the connexion of the two visions is closer than this. The petitioning party in the former vision are *one*. But they are told there is *another* party to come after them, to be treated like themselves, and who will have to be judged and avenged as well as they. They must wait, therefore, till *their* time be over; and then they shall both together "have judgment given them, and their blood be avenged on them that dwell on the earth." "White robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should *rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.*" As these are clearly two distinct parties suffering in succession for Christ, and as the former includes all who suffered under the great red dragon in his *Pagan* form, the latter can be no other than those who were to suffer under the same dragon in his *Papal* form of opposition to Christ. Now, as judgment is promised to the former party as soon as their brethren and fellow-servants of the other party have suffered, or after Antichrist shall have fallen and the millennial time have arrived—we naturally look for *both parties* in our vision, and expect to find "*judgment given*" *to both together* "against them that dwell on the earth." Accordingly, so it is. That exquisite jointing of the corresponding parts of this book—which, with other peculiar features of it, so fascinated Sir Isaac Newton, that he pronounced it to have more characters of divinity than any other book of Scripture—is nowhere better seen than here "I saw (says the apostle) the souls of them that were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God"—'Those whom I had before seen under the altar—the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held—them I now saw again, getting the judgment which then they sought.' So much for the *first* company of martyrs, under Paganism. The next clause of our passage describes the *second* company:—

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* Εδοθη αυτοις ἑκαςτῳ στολη λευκη. So the true reading would seem to be, as given by *Scholz*, *Lachmann*, *Tischendorf*, and *Tregelles*. Scholz, however, omits ἑκαστῳ, and Tregelles puts it in brackets. *Bengel*, whose verbal accuracy seldom fails him, in reply to *Wolfius*, who had said it might justly be doubted whether John wrote αυτοις ἑκαστῳ, says, "But he has written ὑμιν ἑκαστῳ, chap. ii. 23; and so Luke ii. 3, παντες, ἑκαστος· and Acts ii. 8, ἡμεις, ἑκαστος. Paul, Eph. v. 33, ὑμεις ἑκαστος. This very αυτοις ἑκαστῳ occurs in *Sir* xvii. 14."

† It seems doubtful whether the word "little" was originally in the text, but the evidence is scarcely sufficient to remove it.

> "And [I saw the souls of] such as had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon the forehead and in the hand."

The *resurrection* of this company shows they were seen as *dead*, while the "*judgment*" given to them along with the former class—in fulfilment of the promise made to that class, that they should have judgment given them as soon as the other party were "KILLED *as they were*" —puts it beyond doubt that this is a *martyr company* too. Accordingly, we read (ch. xiii. 15), that "it was given to him [the second beast that spake like a dragon, v. 11] to cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be *killed*." *

The last clause of the passage needs no comment: "And they"—these two martyr companies—"lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Thus this celebrated vision is exclusively a visional resurrection of *martyrs*. Not only are none else in it, but the first and last clauses of the passage—the one referring us to those *about to be* described, and the other to these as *already* described—tie us down to the very parties specified in the two middle clauses of the passage, and necessitate the restriction of the whole to the *slain* witnesses of Christ.

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* I have to thank the author of the article already quoted from (p. 234), for pointing out the omission of this passage in my former edition. He is not quite correct, however, when he states, that though I have "rightly named the parties intended, I have not identified them by *any reference* to the earlier chapters," and have "admitted that no mention had been made of their death." My whole reasoning, on the contrary, was built upon the identity of the parties here and in ch. vi. The admission that the death of the second company is not expressly mentioned in our millennial vision, the reviewer himself makes in the same page, and the thing is plain enough.

But though the killing of the second company is sufficiently attested by this passage in ch. xiii. 15, I rest the fact—that they were seen in our vision *as killed persons*—not so much upon that passage as upon the intimations of the sixth chapter. In reply to the passage from ch. xiii. it may be said that though the beast was a persecuting power, and killed, when he could, such as refused subjection to him, it cannot be alleged that none escaped; and therefore we have no evidence that the opponents of the beast in our vision were the *killed* ones. But this escape is cut off by the vision in ch. vi., which expressly tells the first company that they should get judgment when the second company should be "*killed as they were;*" and as both companies are seen in our vision getting judgment together, the *martyr* character of both companies is put beyond doubt.

The reviewer's argument against Mr. Elliott is most close and convincing.

In this view of the vision, *it is utterly inadequate to express the resurrection of the whole Church of God bodily from the grave.* I think every one must see this. The amazing contrast between the all-comprehensive idea to be expressed, and the rigidly limited expression of it, if such it were, would prevent any cautious interpreter from recognizing it in the passage. And is it conceivable that the Spirit of God, supposing him to have reserved the announcement of a prior resurrection of the righteous to one single passage at the end of the canon of revelation, and intending this vision to be the one formal announcement of it, has selected such a mode of revealing it that only an inconsiderable few out of the whole Church of Christ have been able to detect it—that those few are not able to assign satisfactory reasons for the conclusion at which they have arrived—and that the more closely every clause of the passage is investigated, the more sternly are we *forbidden*, by all the admitted rules of interpretation, to put that construction upon it?

But what is fatal to the *literal* sense is eminently favourable to the *figurative.* Need I ask any one familiar with the figurative language of Scripture, and with the scriptural figuration of this very period, familiar with the best writers in every language and every age, or himself accustomed to think and speak in vivid style, whether *a resurrection of the slain witnesses* of Christ of every period, to *people, possess, and hold the supremacy of the earth with their Lord*, be not a conception worthy of the Spirit of God to dictate, and inexpressibly refreshing for the soul of an oppressed Church to be filled with?

I have said that this idea is familiar to the Scripture. In this very book, the figurative resurrection of the witnesses for the truth is thus expressed:—

> "And after three days and an half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet."—(Rev. xi. 11.)

It is indeed part of the classic style of Scripture in depicting this very millennial period. Thus, Will the Jews be brought in?

> "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will OPEN YOUR GRAVES, AND CAUSE YOU TO COME UP OUT OF YOUR GRAVES, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live; and I will place you in your own land."—(Ezek. xxxvii. 12-14.)

> "After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will RAISE US UP, and we shall LIVE in his sight."—(Hos. vi. 2.)

This certainly is figurative. Then, Will this resurrection of Israel be a mighty blessing to the Gentile world?

> "What shall the receiving of them be but LIFE FROM THE DEAD?"

As to the return of a prodigal it is said, "He was DEAD and is ALIVE AGAIN;" and as of the change, in respect of *justification*, which passes upon the believer, it is said, "He shall not come into condemnation, but is passed FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE;" and of *sanctification*, that he is "quickened who was DEAD in trespasses and in sins;" so it is said of the Church—

> "THY DEAD MEN SHALL LIVE," &c.; just as it is said of the opposite party, "They are DEAD, they shall not LIVE; they are DECEASED, they shall NOT RISE: To this end hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all memory of them to perish."—(Isa. xxvi. 19, 14.)

Thus have we the very period of our vision stamped throughout Scripture as a glorious *era of resuscitation.*

I have said further, that this idea is current coin in all vivid thinking, in every age and language.

> "When the venerable priest," says *Merle D'Aubigné*, speaking of John Huss, "had been summoned by Sigismund's order before the Council of Constance, and had been thrown into prison, the chapel of Bethlehem, in which he had proclaimed the gospel and the future triumphs of Christ, occupied his mind much more than his own defence. One night the holy martyr saw in imagination, from the depths of his dungeon, the pictures of Christ that he had painted on the walls of his oratory effaced by the pope and his bishops. This vision distressed him; but on the next day he saw many painters occupied in restoring these figures in greater number and in brighter colours. As soon as their task was ended, the painters, who were surrounded by an immense crowd, exclaimed, 'Now let the popes and bishops come, they shall never efface them more!' And many people rejoiced in Bethlehem, and I with them, adds John Huss. 'Busy yourself with your defence rather than with your dreams,' said his faithful friend, the knight of Chlum, to whom he had communicated this vision. 'I am no dreamer,' replied Huss; 'but I maintain this for certain, that the image of Christ will never be effaced. They have wished to destroy it, but it shall be painted afresh in all hearts by much better preachers than myself. The nation that loves Christ will rejoice at this. AND I, AWAKING FROM AMONG THE DEAD, AND RISING, so to speak, FROM MY GRAVE, SHALL LEAP WITH GREAT JOY."*

Mr. Elliott mentions that a medal exists, representing Huss at the stake, and having this legend round it, *Centum revolutis annis, Deo respondebitis et mihi*—"When a hundred years shall have revolved, ye shall answer to God AND TO ME."†

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* History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century, Vol. i. p. 93. Oliver and Boyd. 1846.

† As this is noticed here to illustrate the *language* only, it is of no consequence whether the coin was struck before or after the Reformation.

He also refers to a Brief addressed by Pope Adrian, in 1523, to the Diet at Nuremberg, containing these words:—"THE HERETICS HUSS AND JEROME ARE NOW ALIVE AGAIN IN THE PERSON OF MARTIN LUTHER."*

By the way, these last illustrations supply a complete answer to the only plausible argument that I have met with against the *figurative* sense of our vision. "Surely, it is said, the *resurrection* must correspond with the *death.* If the one be figurative, so may the other; but if the death be literal—as we have admitted to be the case with both the martyr-companies in this vision—then must the resurrection be the same." This argument is adduced by all literalists as triumphant. But though the *principle* of it is undoubtedly correct, Mr. Elliott, who among others urges it with his accustomed force, has, in the above illustration, himself furnished enough to show that it is pointless in the present case. John Huss, before his death, anticipated the day when, "*awakening from among the dead, and rising from his grave*, he would leap with great joy." Suppose, then, I were to reason thus: "A resurrection ought to be of the same character with the death from which it is a revival: but Huss's death was literal and personal; therefore it must have been his own literal and bodily resurrection which he anticipated on the eve of his death." Was it so, then? No, it was not. Did Huss, then, expect *no* resurrection of himself personally? Of course he did; but *that was not the burden of his thoughts at the time.* He was filled with the thought of the eventual *triumph of the truth he was dying for*, and *that* was the resurrection of *himself* which he so joyfully anticipated. Take now the other case. Pope Adrian said to the Diet at Nuremberg, "The heretics Huss and Jerome are now alive again in the person of Martin Luther." But the death which Huss and Jerome died was a literal and bodily one: shall we therefore say that Adrian meant to tell the Diet that Huss and Jerome were not figuratively, but literally and personally alive in Martin Luther. Absurd. It is true, that Huss and Jerome were literally slain, just as the witnesses in our vision were; but as this did not in the least prevent either Huss or himself anticipating a glorious resurrection in the *person of his successors in the faith*, nor the enemies of both from testifying that they *had* risen and were actually living *in the man* who of all others best represented them, so neither does it hinder us from seeing in this vision the same figurative resurrection of the slain witnesses of Jesus in the millennial day. The only difference is, that what was realized at the Reformation, in Luther and his compeers, was but as a drop in the bucket —"the little cloud as a man's hand"—compared with the millennial resuscitation, not only in point of numbers, but the completeness of the triumph. For while Huss and Jerome, as witnesses for Christ, were put completely down by the anti-christian party in their day, Luther and his coadjutors at the Reformation were not able to put *them* completely down in their turn. But at the time of our vision, the witnesses for Christ of every age shall not only "live and reign" in their successors "for a thousand years," but "*the rest of the dead* (the opposing party) *will live not again until the thousand years shall be fulfilled*— This is the first resurrection." And "*blessed*," surely, "shall be he" whose lot is cast in such times, and "*holy* shall he be that hath part in this first resurrection"—representing in his person the noble army of martyrs, yet without being exposed, as they were, to be crushed and swept off the stage, merely because Jesus and his truth were dearer to them than life itself!

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* *Hor. Apoc.* ut supra, ii. 394.

IX. My *last* argument against the literal sense appears to me of itself to settle the meaning of the vision. It can offer no consistent explanation of the "*judgment* that was given unto" the slain martyrs. What judgment was this? Clearly the same that the first company of them *sought*, and were assured they would *get* as soon as the second company were ready to receive it along with them —"How long, O Lord, dost thou not JUDGE and AVENGE OUR BLOOD ON THEM THAT DWELL ON the earth?" If the two words "judge" and "avenge" here do not mean precisely the same thing—the latter being explanatory of the former—they, at least, mean things inseparable from each other, and to be received at one and the same time. When "it was said unto them, that they should rest yet a little longer until" the other company "should be killed as they were"—the meaning is, "Judgment *shall* be given unto you, and your blood shall be avenged on them that dwell on the earth," when that period arrives. Accordingly, when our millennial vision says, "I saw JUDGMENT *given unto them*"—the martyr companies—it is impossible, I think, to doubt that the meaning is, "I saw the Lord fulfilling his pledge to the souls under the altar,—I saw him *judging and avenging their blood*—and the blood of the other company along with them—*on them that dwell on the earth.*" If this be correct, of course *the slain*, and *those who slew them*, must be taken in the same sense. If the judgment is to be given unto the martyrs *personally* at the millennium, their blood must also be *personally avenged* on them that dwell on the earth. If the martyrs are to rise bodily from their graves, in order that judgment may be personally given to them, then their persecutors, every one of them, must be raised from their graves, to have vengeance rendered to them for the blood of those dear saints which they shed. If *Paul*, for example, was seen in this millennial vision having "judgment given to him" in his individual person, why is not *Nero* here also, to have apostolic "blood avenged upon him?" If *Ignatius*, why not also *Trajan?* If *Justin*, and *Polycarp*, and the blessed martyrs of *Lyons* and *Vienne*, why is not the mild and lauded *Marcus Antoninus* confronted with them in this "judicial," "blood-avenging" resurrection? Why, in a word, is not the long line of bloody emperors, and their more guilty minions, arrayed *in person* before the hundreds of thousands of the martyrs of Jesus, of whom the world was not worthy, whose blood they poured out like water, with little intermission, for three hundred years? On all just principles of interpretation, if the cry for "judgment" and "vengeance ON their enemies" is to bring up the martyrs in *their* persons at the millennium, the same cry ought to bring up their enemies in person along with them, for *their* part of the judgment. So with respect to the second class—after whose slaughter the whole army of martyrs is to be judged—if the Lord's

> "Slaughtered saints, whose bones
> Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold,"

are *personally* to appear in this millennial resurrection, why not also

> "The bloody Piedmontese, that rolled
> Mother with infant down the rocks"?

And shall the seventy thousand dear French Christians that perished in three days—to the eternal infamy of the Church of Rome—rise from their graves for "judgment" at the millennium, and, while looking for the avenging of their blood on them that shed it, shall they miss the bloody *Guises*, and that *Man of Sin* who, from his throne on the seven hills, caused a medal to be struck in honour of this fearful slaughter of the Huguenots?

Certain it is, that the judgment which John saw the martyrs get, brings up not one of the persecutors in their individual *persons.* Have the martyrs been deceived, then? Having asked bread, have they gotten a stone? No, but you misinterpret their petition. The thing *granted* shows what we are to understand by the thing *asked.* They get "judgment" on the *cause* that slew them. That, therefore, is the judgment *sought.* It is just the testimony of Jesus, once *slain* in the martyrs, at length living in their millennial successors—trodden once, but now triumphant Listen to the following words of the 18th chapter: "Rejoice over her (over Babylon), thou heaven, and ye saints and apostles and prophets; * for God hath *avenged you on her*" (v. 20). "*Reward her even as she rewarded you*" (v. 6). And again, in the 19th chapter, "He hath *judged* the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath *avenged the blood of his servants at her hand*" (v. 2). Here you have both parties together—the party *avenged*, namely, "the saints and apostles and prophets," from the beginning; and the party "*on* whom God hath avenged them," namely, Babylon, the harlot-Church, in its destruction. It is simply the fall of this anti-christian, cursed, bloody system, that is meant. Over her ruin the whole Church of God, of every age, and especially those who fell under her murderous policy, are called to rejoice. as if personally avenged in the destruction of that which destroyed them.

I am far from denying that this righting of the cause of Christ and his enemies involves *an ultimate resurrection of the persons of all* on either side—to everlasting life in the one case, and to shame and everlasting contempt in the other. In this sense, the millennial state, as being the *next stage* and the *nearest resemblance* to the eternal state, is described in the Old Testament prophets in language which in the Apocalypse is appropriated, with slight elevation of strain, to the everlasting state. But if you *raise* the platform of the vision on the one side into the celestial and eternal region, by bringing up the martyrs into glory at the millennium, you must not *sink* the platform on the other side, by leaving the persecutors to rot quietly in their graves for a thousand years more. This is a clumsy expedient, which creates more difficulties than it removes, and in the case of our vision, fails, as we have seen, to meet the requirements of the text.

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* Και ο before απ στ. in all the critical editions.

To put this argument, then, in a single sentence, the "judging" and "avenging," if not precisely the same thing, plainly go together—as in the petition, so in the bestowment: the thing meant is one and the same interposition *in favour of* the one party and *against* the other; with reference to the *cause* at the millennium, and at the great day with reference to the *persons*, when all who have had any thing to do in the conflict shall "go to their own place."

Thus have I examined this celebrated passage both presumptively and directly, both generally and in detail. Though I have adduced some considerations which, even before examining the passage, seemed to bear very hard against the literal sense, it will not be said that I took advantage of these to prejudge the question. I have rejected some arguments in favour of the figurative sense which did not appear to be tenable, as proceeding upon a mistaken apprehension of what the vision really was; and while I have freely availed myself of the observations of others on both sides, I have presented the whole in the light in which it rose before my own mind. Some of the arguments which I have advanced appear to me decisive of themselves; but taking the whole *nine* arguments together, I believe the conclusion to which they lead—that the millennial is a figurative, not a literal resurrection—cannot be overthrown.

And this is the "*seat*" of the doctrine of a resurrection of the righteous a thousand years before the wicked. If this, now, be dislodged—and the confirmations of it elsewhere were found to be none—the whole doctrine falls, and with it, of course, the pre-millennial theory itself, which absolutely depends upon it.*

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* *Mr. Birks*, in his "Four Prophetic Empires" (Appendix II.), gives an elaborate and acute reply to certain objections which had been taken to his Lent Lecture on "the First Resurrection," by the Rev. *E. G. Marsh*, and sets himself further to strengthen his position. With every disposition to weigh well what so candid and forcible a writer advances (part of which Mr. Birks will see does not apply to any thing that I have urged) I find nothing in these observations of his which has not been sufficiently met, as I humbly think, in the foregoing chain of argument.

I take this opportunity of inserting an extract, which should have been reprinted from my former edition, but was omitted in its proper place. *Bishop Newton* says, "We should be cautious and tender of making the first resurrection an allegory, lest others should reduce the second into an allegory too."

"In answer," says *Fraser* (of Kirkhill), "I would observe that the Scriptures frequently mention the second or new birth. The first birth is that of the body. Is it necessary that the second should be so too? Will any man, acquainted with the Scriptures, put the question now which Nicodemus formerly proposed to our Lord, 'How can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?'—(John iii. 4.) The second birth is doubtless an allegory. But does it follow that the first birth is an allegory too? The Scriptures mention the second death; now the first death is that of the body. But is it necessary that we understand the second death of the body only? Does it affect the body in the same manner, by putting it in a state of insensibility and putrefaction? The terms first and second are used in Scripture to distinguish subjects which are in some respects similar, but in others are very different, lest we should mistake the one for the other; and so the term 'first resurrection' is used here to show that this part of the prophecy does not describe such a change as shall take place at the general resurrection. Again, it may signify, that as the first death is to wicked men an earnest of, and a preparatory step to, the second death; so the first resurrection is to good men an earnest of, and preparatory step to, the general resurrection."*

* Key to the Prophecies, (1795), pp. 408, 409.

CHAPTER XI.

JUDGMENT—OF RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED TOGETHER—AT CHRIST'S COMING.

THERE is no department of divine truth more deeply and dangerously affected by the pre-millennial scheme than that which relates to THE JUDGMENT. It is not the mere division into *two parts* of what the word of God represents as *one undivided scene ;* it is not the separation into *two periods*, distant from each other by the space of a thousand years, of what Scripture holds forth as *one unbroken piece of divine procedure ;* but it is, that it mixes up with the judgment what has nothing to do with it, that it takes out of the judgment some of its essential features, and that for a large portion of the human race it provides no judgment at all.

Finding it impossible to deny that the *immediate purpose* of Christ's Second Coming is to judge the world, and postponing the last judgment till a thousand years after his coming, they require to find *judicial employment* for the Saviour, onwards from the time of his coming till the period of final judgment arrive. For this purpose, the expedient—first devised by *Mede*, if I mistake not—has, with modern pre-millennialists, found universal favour, by which the judgment-day is spread over the whole thousand years. In justification, or at least illustration, of this, the words of Peter are usually quoted, "A thousand years are with the Lord as one day." Of this long day, the period of Christ's coming is the *morning*, while the end of the millennium is the *evening;* and throughout the whole of it, but especially the morning and evening divisions of it, judicial work is found for the Saviour.

Mr. Brooks thus represents the work of the day:—

> "The single idea entertained of the *judgment* by most persons is, that it will be a great assize, at which the Lord Jesus will preside, and all mankind be put upon their trial. But the characteristics ot a *judge*, as given in the Scriptures, are as follows—*to rule and govern as a king*, *to deliver and avenge his people*, *and to protect and defend them from their enemies;* whence it follows that the judgment of Christ must consist, not only in vengeance and punishment, but also in government and rule, and that the Lord must consequently act the King in this his character as judge." After several references to places where the words *judge* and *judgment* are used in this extended sense, he adds, "The chief prophecies which relate to Christ as a judge, and to the judgment he will execute, will further demonstrate that *princely rule and government* are to be the *special characteristics of his judgment*, and that it will be a continued office among or over the nations." A little further on, he says, "Another important feature of the judgment is the *vengeance* of the Lord upon his own and his people's enemies; for all this, and the gathering out of his kingdom every thing that offends and does iniquity, is, in my apprehension of it, included in THE JUDGMENT. The period of judgment must consequently comprehend those tremendous visitations or vials of wrath which precede the millennium, the whole time of the saints' rule, and that final visitation of the wicked which occurs at the expiration of the millennium."*

Now there can be no doubt that the words "judge" and "judgment" are used in Scripture, both in the sense of *exercising kingly rule* and in the sense of *inflicting public vengeance.* But the question is, *Are these the senses in which Christ will come to judge at the great day?* I say, emphatically, No; and nothing but the most violent distortion of all the passages which announce that coming to judgment, can bring these senses of the terms into the procedure of that day.

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* Elem. of Proph. Interp. pp. 207, 208, 217.

For what are those things which, it is alleged, belong to the judgment of the great day, and are its special characteristics? The answer is, Rule over *nations*, and vengeance inflicted upon *public bodies*, of one sort or other: whereas the essence of the judgment which Christ comes for, is a judgment upon individual *persons*, in which "the secrets of the heart" are brought out, weighed, and decided upon for ever. But you say, We hold that too; we take *both in.* I answer, You do *in words;* but in reality, or to any practical purpose, you neither do nor can include both in *one judgment.* Let any one try it in his own mind, let any minister try it in his preaching, and he will quickly find the truth of what I say. The two things are so perfectly different—judgments upon *public masses* of men, and judgment upon *individual souls* of men—temporal judgments, and what Scripture (with an emphasis which speaks volumes here) calls "*eternal judgment*," not to speak of "kingly government," which also they say they take in; these things are so different from each other, and they suggest so different a train of thought, that the mind cannot get hold of them all together—cannot put them into one unmixed conception. They will ever be falling asunder. They want unity, and wanting this, that riveting and absorbing power which the single word *judgment*, on the ordinary view of it, possesses, is wanting also.

But another difficulty arises here as to these *public* chastisements,—these inflictions of *temporal* vengeance, carrying with them the temporal *destruction*, it is alleged, of vast numbers of Christ's enemies. Since they certainly are not of the nature of an "assize," in which the *individual* victims of that temporal destruction are "put upon their trial," one naturally asks, Is this all the judgment they are ever to undergo? If so, here is *all judicial trial of such persons*, except in the loosest sense, given up; and if in the case of so many, why not of all?* But if you say, These pre-millennial judgments, with which the coming of the Lord is to be ushered in, are altogether *independent* of the personal judgment of the individuals involved in them, which will remain still to be gone through against them at the final judgment of the wicked—this is to give up your own principle. You made the pre-millennial judgments part of the judgment of the great day; and yet, conscious that this would never suffice, and as if no judgment had taken place on the parties involved in them, you bring them up to the judgment over again *in the only true and proper way*. In this a manageable and self-consistent view of the judgment?

One of the best illustrations of the impracticability of the scheme on this head, we have in the comments of pre-millennialists upon the judgment recorded in the *twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew*. As righteous and wicked appear there before one tribunal, and the pre-millennial scheme will not admit of that, the problem is, how to get over it. The view given of it by Mr. Dallas, strange to say, is not confined to himself.

> "When the Son of Man shall (at the opening of the millennium) sit upon the throne of his glory, before him shall be gather-

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* So very loosely do some write on this awful subject, that in the very paragraphs in which they are speaking of "the judgment of the quick," or living, as a *personal* judgment of the living *wicked* as well as righteous, they tell us, that "remnants of such shall be spared *in the judgment*, and converted by means of it, to enter into the millennial kingdom in the flesh, and be the means of converting others." Did ever any one hear of ungodly men standing at the judgment-seat of Christ, and, instead of being condemned as such, spared, nay, *converted* by that very judgment, and made missionaries to others?

ed"—not "all nations," as we render it, but—"all the *Gentiles*." They are not *Christians*, as is commonly thought, who put that question out of mere *humility*, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered and fed thee?" But they are *heathens;* and the question is one of *ignorance* asking information—as if some inhabitant of China or Japan, he says, amongst whom had come a missionary in the last days of this dispensation and been persecuted, should have "felt constrained to succour him," ignorant, however, whose servant he was; insomuch that when Jesus should, from the throne of his glory, say the deed was done to Him, pointing at the same time to the glorified body of this missionary sitting on the throne beside him, the poor Japanese, *still a mortal man*, though standing before the throne of Christ's glory, *seeing* this missionary, would be very much astonished at the information—whereas, to a Christian no such information would be required! These, then, are "the sheep," and the opposite piece of *information* is communicated to "the goats"—such "Gentiles," or heathens, as had ill-treated his servants. Now for the *decision*. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom," &c. Come, that is, inherit the sovereignty described in the first chapter of Genesis—have "dominion over the fish of the sea," &c. "*They are set apart as the new stook of the generation of Adam, whom he will educate for a thousand years*, without the influence of the devil to counteract the effect of *a dispensation of sight*. The millennial period seems the period *for the education of the new stock of mankind for the restored earth*." And what becomes of the goats? To what *earthly* destiny are they "set apart?" All the answer I can find is in these words, "They are lost, condemned." Well, but when? At the beginning of the millennium? It is not said. But he tells us of "a last sifting," at the end of the millennium, to secure what that millennial education had done for the new stock of mankind; when Satan being once more let loose for a season, the chaff of these "Gentiles" shall be separated from the wheat, and final perdition shall attend all who are manifested as retaining any taint of the corrupt nature. Meanwhile (that is, after the last judgment), Jerusalem shall be the joy and light of the earth; and the Jews—the kindred of the man Jesus, the Son of God made man—these shall all be holy *men and women going on from generation to generation* (that is, throughout all eternity, as we found Mr. Bickersteth and others holding), and in each generation, Christians, spiritual, converted people; while, as to the glorified members of the Church, "wherever the Lord Jesus is, there his saints shall be."*

Comment on this view of the judgment in Matthew is as superfluous as it would be difficult. But you say, perhaps there are better views of it than this; why detail this one? Let us try, then, the only other one I am acquainted with, on the pre-millennial principle of excluding a simultaneous judgment of righteous and wicked.

It is that of Mede. adopted by Mr. Bickersteth and Mr. Birks. According to this view, it is not *one judgment* at all, but *two*—one at the beginning and the other at the end. These take "the sentence of absolution to continue all the time of the first resurrection, that is, all the thousand years long. That once ended and finished, and not before, he shall proceed to pronounce the sentence of condemnation upon such as are to be condemned." †

"The true and full view," says Mr. Bickersteth, "seems to be that which makes it include the resurrection of the just at the *beginning*, and the unjust at the *close* of the millennial day. . . The work of acquittal and mercy, which is our Lord's delight, is first in order; afterwards follows the sentence of wrath, which is his strange work. We follow the current of God's word, as well as the deep instincts of a heart and conscience renewed in love after the image of Christ, in assigning the sentence of reward and mercy to the morning, and the sentence of condemnation to the evening of that great and terrible day." He thinks this view of the passage is confirmed by the omission of the word "brethren" in the case of the wicked. To the righteous, it is said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of my brethren," without any mention of the wicked; whereas to the wicked it is merely said, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto the least of *these*," by which he conceives is meant, not "these righteous," but "these wicked"—each company standing by itself and without the presence of the others, before the Judge, and each "containing within itself the full test of its acceptance and its rejection; the righteous in their own mutual and brotherly love, the wicked in their own mutual hatefulness and hatred."*

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* Lent Lect. for 1843, *ut supra*, No. VIII.

† Mede's Works, p. 841.

Need I appeal to the reader whether this *broken judgment* does not utterly break down the solemn impression which the bare reading of the scene in Matthew irresistibly makes upon all minds? Mr. Bickersteth himself, than whom no man is more able to feel the force of this remark, seems conscious of danger in this direction. "For the purpose (he says) of clearly enforcing the great issues of the judgment, our Lord brings into close contrast the acts of the morning and evening of that great judgment-day. FURTHER DETAILS WOULD ONLY HAVE BROKEN THE SOLEMN IMPRESSION OF THE TRUTH taught in this account of the last judgment." I think "the solemn impression of the truth taught" here, is "broken" sufficiently by the "details" which Mr. Bickersteth himself introduces into it.

But this suggests an important question: Why should "details" *tend* to break up our solemn impression of the judgment? If details be in *the thing*, why should the mention of them have that effect? I will answer the question. The word of God represents the judgment, and every enlightened conscience instinctively looks forward to it as one unbroken and simultaneous act—how brief, or how protracted, does not in the least affect this view of it; and every introduction of those "details" which the premillennial theory brings into it, of morning acts and evening acts, besides the mid-day acts of "government and rule," is an intrusion which the mind will not tolerate, and can only listen to at the expense of having all its solemn impressions of it dissipated.

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* Guide, pp. 284–286, with note. Fifth Edition.

So much is this the case, that you cannot take up a volume of sermons in which the subject is handled by a pre-millennialist, and pressed home upon the conscience, without finding that he proceeds upon the common view of it, laying aside, or, as much as possible, keeping away from "details," which just means *every thing different from the ordinary view.* I remember being struck with this many years ago, in Dr. M'Neile's volume of "Seventeen Sermons;" and his sermon in the more recent volume, from which I have repeatedly quoted, entitled "Righteous Retribution at the Second Advent," is much of the same nature. In all its *general* descriptions and appeals, it is solemn and stirring; but in proportion as pre-millennial "details," find their way into his statements, the subject is lowered, and the impression diluted.

But we have a large class of men yet to provide for. At what part of the great judgment-day do the myriads of mankind who live during the millennium come in to be judged. *Nowhere.* They were not in being to be included in the acts of the *morning*, and share in the resurrection-glory then awarded. The *mid-day* acts of government and rule are no judicial trial of, and decision upon, their personal character for eternity; and the closing act of all, at the end of the millennium, which is the *evening* of the day, cannot take them in—the saints among them at least—for it is a judgment of the *wicked* only. The scheme, in fact, *makes no provision for their being judged at all*, as we found it made no provision for their being *raised* at all. From this, the reader will judge of its Scriptural merits.*

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* The *Messrs. Bonar* have each of them replied to these observations. Mr. A. Bonar "conceives that it is very likely there shall be a meeting at the *great white throne*, which shall be truly universal. We lose nothing of the advantage supposed to be found in this idea. There shall be a *general judgment* after the millennium. There shall be a resurrection of the wicked; and how immense the multitude, small and great, that

In direct contrast with these most unsatisfactory views of the Judgment, I feel persuaded that the following simple proposition will commend itself to every unprejudiced reader, as it has done to the Church of God in all ages, as the truth :—

PROPOSITION EIGHTH:

THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED WILL BE JUDGED TOGETHER, AND BOTH AT THE COMING OF CHRIST.

The passages which express this truth are very numerous, and amongst the plainest in Scripture, requiring, in-

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arise and come to judgment! But besides these endless millions of the ungodly, there are present the happy millions of the saved, in their white robes, and with their crowns. For now is the season when that word shall be fulfilled, 'Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?' 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?' . . . . It is every way likely, too, that on that day Satan and every lost soul of all these millions shall hear from the lips of the Judge the grounds on which he acquitted each one of his redeemed."—(*Red.* pp. 158, 159.) Mr. Bonar here takes the final resurrection and judgment, in Rev. xx. 11–15, to be of the *wicked alone*. The righteous are present as "*assessors*" indeed, but Mr. Bonar does not say, and evidently does not hold, that they are *judged* then. "Satan and the lost hear from the lips of the Judge the grounds on which he *acquitted* each one of his redeemed," that is to say, the grounds on which he *had* done so *a thousand years before*. The fact of this long prior judgment, and the grounds of it, may be announced; but *the judgment itself* is not then. And if so, of what use is it to say, "There shall be a *general judgment* after the millennium"? It does homage to the *principle* of a general judgment, as that which every one feels to be a first principle in religion; but while conceding it in *words*, it is not meant to convey the belief of it in the only sense in which every one understands such a statement.

Mr. H. Bonar (with Mr. Elliott, iv. 223, *ut sup.*) "is satisfied that the scene described in the 25th of Matthew, which is supposed to be an insuperable barrier [to the thousand years' interval between the judgment of the righteous and the wicked], refers to those *upon the earth*, not to *risen men* at all. It is 'all nations' that are gathered together. It is the judgment of the 'quick.' The scene is quite different from that in the close of the 20th of Revelation, where all the *dead* arise from earth and sea. And it resembles most closely that of Joel (iii. 1–15), "I will gather all nations (*παντα τα εθνη*, in both passages), and will bring them down deed, no comment, except it be to show how forced is every other sense of them.

> Matt. x. 32, 33: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven"—(*i. e.*) "*When he cometh* in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."—(Mark viii. 38.)

Here the acknowledging of the one class and the disowning of the other are expressly said to take place at the same time, namely, "when Christ comes in his glory."

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into the valley of Jehoshaphat. . . . Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles (*εν τ. εθνεσιν*); Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen (*παντα τ. εθνη κυκλοθεν*). . . . . Let the heathen (*τ. εθνη*) be awakened: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about (*παντα τ. εθνη κυκλοθεν*). . . . . Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision." If this be the case, the difficulty supposed to be against us from this passage does not exist.—(*Coming and Kingdom*, &c., p. 105.) This is plainly to make the *judgment* in Matthew a mere *temporal* judgment—a judgment against nations opposing the kingdom, cause, and people of God. But can any one take this in? This is decidedly the lowest view of the *judgment* in Matthew which I have met with, if we except Mr. Dallas' already mentioned. Nor am I able to comprehend the parallelism which Mr. Bonar finds in Joel. The "nations" there are all of *one* class—*hostile* nations—gathered to the valley of Jehoshaphat, to have vengeance executed against them. This will be manifest at a glance of the chapter. But when Christ sits upon the throne of his glory, and gathers before him "all nations," he will "separate them as a shepherd divideth his *sheep* from the *goats;* receiving the one to life eternal, as well as consigning the other to everlasting fire." The parallelism, therefore, is so far from holding, that I am not able to discern one feature that the passages have in common, save that "*all nations*" is expressed in the Greek by the same two words in both places! Mr. Bonar, by the way, calls this judgment, as he expounds it, to be the judgment of the "quick." Does he mean, then, that this temporal judgment is to be all the judgment that is ever to pass upon these "nations?" If not, and these "quick" need to be "judged" over again as "dead," what has such a judgment to do with the solemn awards recorded in the 25th of Matthew?

"I am unable," continues Mr. H. Bonar, "to appreciate the force of Mr. Brown's reasonings against the judgment being broken up into parts

To limit those who are to be disowned to such as shall be found *alive* when Christ comes, so as to make it a judgment on the "*quick*" only, is a direct contradiction of the words, "*Whosoever* shall deny me, shall be denied" then, which unquestionably Christ meant the deserters of his cause *in every age* to take to themselves.

To this class of passages belong the following:—

> Rev. xxi. 7, 8: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the cowardly,* and unbelieving, &c., shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
>
> Ch. xxii. 12–15: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is

My conscience may not be one of the 'enlightened' ones of which he speaks; but I confess I do not see how the breaking up of the judgment into *acts* or *parts* will dissipate its solemnity."—(Pp. 105, 106.) This is a point which I am very much disposed to leave to the reader. At the same time, I can furnish Mr. Bonar with a statement on the subject, to which—as coming from his own side of the controversy, and from one whom I have before remarked as distinguished for the candour and force with which he writes—he will probably attach some weight. Says *Mr. Birks*, "There are three decisive objections to the view [of this passage in Matthew] which refers it to the judgment of *living nations* before the millennium begins. First, the judgment of the living has been described in the previous parables. Secondly, the nations not included in the Church are *not* all gathered together at the opening of the millennium. (Isa. lxvi.) And thirdly, *the sentence on the wicked is plainly not the sentence of present death*, *but of everlasting judgment, which follows the close of the millennium.* And besides, *from the evident climax, no other interpretation answers to* THE MAJESTY AND GRANDEUR OF THIS IMPRESSIVE DESCRIPTION. *Accordingly*, THE CHURCH HAS UNIVERSALLY APPLIED IT *to the decision* OF THE FINAL STATE OF MANKIND."—(Lent Lect. for 1843, No. VII. Note at end.)

* Τοις δειλοις. "The fearful, or coward," says *Durham*—"opposite to the former fighter and overcomer." So *Tregelles*. *Luther:* Den Verzachten (the dispirited). The same class that Christ describes as "denying him before men," and "ashamed of him and his words in an adulterous and sinful generation"—wanting the *courage* of true faith.

> with me, to give *to every man* according as his work is.* I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.† Blessed are they who wash their robes,‡ that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

This *admission* of the one class and *rejection* of the other is manifestly the immediate sequel of Christ's "coming, and his reward with him, to give to every one [of both classes and at the same time] according to his work." If any doubt of this could remain, it would be removed by

> Matt. xvi. 24–27: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself," &c. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain," &c.; "or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; *and then* (τοτε) he shall reward *every man according to his works*."

How is it possible to doubt that *both classes* and *of all ages* will be judged together, with such a passage as this before us?

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* Εστιν (*Lachm. Tisch. Treg.*) Scholz retains εσται.

† All the forementioned editors give the clauses in this order.

‡ Οἱ πλυνοντες τας στολας αυτων. This beautiful reading of the *Alexandrine* MS., of the *Vatican* MS. (the one in *cursive* letters, known as No. 38), and of the *Vulgate*, *Ethiop.*, and *Armenian* versions, is adopted by *Lachmann*, *Tischendorf*, and *Tregelles*. It is easy to account for the introduction of the received reading from the resemblance between πλυνοντες (or as No. 38 has it, πλυνοῦντες) and ποιοῦντες, and of στολας to εντολας—without supposing *doctrinal leanings* to have had any influence. Mr. Elliott notices the beautiful reference of this reading to chap. vii. 9, 13, 14; "the state of heavenly bliss being in the earlier chapter *anticipatively* foreshown, and in the latter one symbolized as actually *realized* and *present* (iv. 244, *ut. sup.*)

> "Matt. vii 21–23: "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall *enter into* the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me *in that day*, Lord, Lord," &c. "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: *depart from me*," &c.

Here we have the reception and rejection—admission and exclusion—both at once—"in that day." Nor can *Mr. Birks*' principle of "sacred perspective," by which two things at a distance are seen as one, and in this case at the distance of a thousand years—and "the little season" after that too—be permitted to intrude here.

> To the same effect, chap. xxv. 10: "And while the foolish virgins went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord,* open unto us. But he answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not."

Do not these words plainly tell us that Christ, when he comes, will take judicial account of the treatment which he has himself received at the hands of men—of *every age* and of *both classes*—and of the value they have put upon their own souls; determining the weal or the woe of *all together* "according to their works?"

We have the same truth in the parable of the *Talents* (Matt. xxv. 14–30)—in which "the man who travels into a far country," but before his departure "calls his servants and delivers to them his goods, returns after a long time, and reckons with them." As this represents the departure and return of Christ, with the whole period of his absence from the earth, so the "reckoning," which is manifestly *one transaction*, embraces all the professed servants of Christ, from first to last—not only the "*good and faithful*" classes, who, in the language of the parable, having doubled their talents, are invited to "enter into the joy of their Lord," but also the "*wicked and slothful*," or "*un profitable*" class, who are ordered to be "cast into outer darkness," &c.*

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* The same "vain repetition" (βαττολογια) as in chap. vii. 21, 22.

And does not the immediately subsequent description of the JUDGMENT convey the same truth, of a simultaneous judgment of the righteous and the wicked, in language as transparent as it is sublimely worthy of the scene itself?

> Matt. xxv. 31–46: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then (τοτε) shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. (Compare chap. xvi. 27.) And before him shall be gathered all nations:† and he shall

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* "No doubt the image underlying this language is, that the master celebrates his return by a great festival, to which each of the servants, as soon as he has rendered his accounts, and shown that he has been true to his master's interests in his absence, is bidden freely to enter." But "while there is light and joy and feasting within, to celebrate the master's return, the darkness without shall be the portion of the unprofitable servant."—*Trench* on the Parables.

Εκεῖ (σκοτος τ. εξωτερον) *ibi.* Extra locum convivii, lucidissimum.—(*Bengel.*)

† Παντα τα εθνη. Undoubtedly this, like every similar expression, is often used in a limited sense. But in Matt. xxviii. 19 (παντα τ. εθνη = πασῃ τῃ κτισει, Mark xvi. 15), and other places, it denotes *mankind universally and individually.* To refer, therefore, to places in which it is employed in the *former* sense, does nothing to show that this is its meaning here. But it is urged that the *test* by which the parties are here tried, is one which is applicable only to *professed disciples of Christ;* and consequently that this must be a *limited* judgment, from which all heathens—strangers to Christianity—are excluded. I am surprised that such men as Mr. Elliott should reason thus (iv. 223, *ut supra.*) We might as well conclude that because the test mentioned in Rom. ii. 5–11, is much the same as here—"obeying" or "not obeying *the truth*"—therefore the judgment there described will be limited to hearers of the gospel; whereas the subsequent verses, 12–16, show that the *heathens* will be judged at the same time, though by a different rule of course. Does not the Scripture, and indeed every species of writing

> separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then (τοτε) shall the King say unto them on his right hand, "Come, ye blessed," &c. "Then (τοτε) shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed," &c. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

We have seen what efforts are made to set aside the testimony of this passage—some (as Mr. Elliott and Mr. H. Bonar) admitting it to be one transaction, but bringing it down to the level of judgments against living nations, or confederacies of evil; while others (as Mr Bickersteth and Mr. Birks). not prepared for such a degradation of the solemn scene, make it two judgments—seen in sacred perspective as one, but separated from each other by a thousand years. Both of these interpretations are alike forced. As the former destroys the *personal* and *eternal* character of the judgment itself, so the latter is directly in the teeth of some of the most solemn features of the passage, which first gathers both parties before the throne in one mass, at the summons of "the King;" next separates the sheep from the goats; and then, having judged and passed sentence upon each, finally disposes of both accordingly *

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speak of things as if they *stood alone*, when the sense merely is, that they are the only subjects of *consideration at the time!*

* Mr. H. Bonar, though adopting an explanation of this scene, which makes it *one* transaction, reasons upon it exactly as those do who make it *two*—one at the beginning and the other at the end of the millennium—comparing it to *binary stars*, which though one to the naked eye, the telescope has resolved into two (p. 107). And in a note (No. viii.), he gathers together a number of difficulties in the way of sorting the various descriptions of the judgment, to show, I suppose, that it is impossible to determine by them whether the judgment will be simultaneous or not. A single glance at the examples he gives, of apparent contradiction in these descriptions, is enough to show how very trifling they are. But it is impossible to go into such minutiæ here.

The bare unsophisticated reading of the passage will do more, I believe, to dissipate such expositions of it as I have mentioned than whole pages of reasoning. I merely add, that commentators of every description regard the scene here depicted as one continuous transaction.

Here I introduce a passage referred to under the head of *Resurrection* (pp. 205, 206), but reserved for comment to this head.

> Matt. xiii. 30, 38–43: "Let both [tares and wheat] grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn. . . . . The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then (*τοτε*) shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

The points to which I request the reader's attention here are these: first, that the judgment spoken of is at the very time of Christ's coming. as is admitted on all hands; next, that not only are the tares gathered at the same "harvest-time" with the wheat. but the tares are gathered and burned first (so in Matt. xxv 46); lastly, that as the sowing of the tares runs parallel. in point of time, with the sowing of the good seed, and represents all the false hearted professors of religion *in every age*, whom Christ will have to remain till he come; so the gathering and burning of these at the time of harvest, denotes *the judg* *ment of* THE WHOLE OF THE WICKED *at the time of Christ's coming.* And "THEN [τοτε]," and not till then, "shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

No ingenuity, it appears to me, can set aside this bright testimony to the truth of the proposition we are now illustrating.*

I will now re-quote, but need scarcely comment on, our Lord's announcement of the resurrection and judgment of both classes at once, after what I have already said on it (pp. 201–205).

> John v. 28, 29: "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come

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* This passage, by the way, affords a ready answer to all that is said in favour of a "judgment of the quick," or *living* wicked at the coming of Christ, separate from those that have to be raised for judgment from their graves. Many passages in which righteous and wicked are brought together, and represented as judged together, at Christ's coming (such as Matt. xxv. 1–13; Luke xii. 46, xiii. 25), are considered to speak only of such wicked *as shall be living when Christ comes.* Now, not to insist on the violence which this seems to put upon those passages, this parable of the tares unanswerably shows that no such view was intended. For were we to conclude that because no tares could be gathered at the time of harvest from a field, but such as were actually *in the field at that time,* therefore only the wicked living at the time of Christ's coming were meant here, we should pervert the figure to what it was never meant to teach. There is always a defect in the capacity of parabolic teaching. The defect here is, that it cannot represent those corrupt members of the Church-visible who have *been* in the field (to use the figure of the parable), but are removed out of it by *death,* generation after generation, before Christ comes. And yet we have seen above, that all these are meant as the tares to be gathered and burned when Christ comes. Though the figure represents only the wicked *then living,* the parable as a whole teaches that the tares represent *the children of the devil at large.* So even in those representations which are not parabolic—those alive when Christ comes, though alone *directly* spoken of, are to be understood as embracing all of the same class—whether saints or sinners—that have ever lived. (See the quotation from BENGEL, Note, pp. 16, 17.)

> forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

I have little to add on this passage, in addition to what has been said under a former head (pp. 201–205). The resurrection and the judgment are here connected together, the one act being represented as in order to the other, and both said to be done in one "hour." It is not the *length of time* which this word "hour" is designed to mark. It may take a short or a long time. But it is the unity of *period and action* which alone is intended, and which, notwithstanding all the criticisms made upon it, can never, without violence, be made to comprehend under it the multifarious and broken transactions that are expected to occur from the beginning of the thousand years to the last judgment. Mark here, also, the different *character* of the resurrection in the case of the righteous and the wicked, the one "the resurrection of *life;* the other, the resurrection of *damnation:* the one holding of the second Adam; the other of the *first*." The Son of God is the doer of both. But the one class he raises in the exercise of grace the other in the exercise of justice. It is the life of the Head, in the one case, reaching the bodies of his members, as long before it had reached their souls: it is the "*wrath* of the Lamb" in the other case, summoning to damnation all the workers of iniquity

> Acts xvii. 31: "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Whether we look at the parties here said to be judged —"*the world*" generally, and "*all men every where*," in particular—or observe the "fixing" (εστησει) of "*a day*" for doing the whole, without a hint of any *break*, it seems difficult to conceive how the Spirit of God could have conveyed to us the idea of one continuous unbroken judgment, of righteous and wicked together, more plainly than this passage does it. To break up a judgment so described into two or more fragmentary judgments, as pre-millennialists are forced to do, only shows what unreasonable demands their system makes upon them.

The following passage is singularly decisive :—

> Rom. ii. 5–16 : " But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God ; who will render to every man according to his deeds : to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life ; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile : but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good ; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile, *in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men* by Jesus Christ."

Observe the alternations here from righteous to wicked, and from wicked to righteous, in the description of one and the same day of judgment. Observe, too, the names given to this day : It is called emphatically " the *day of wrath*, and of the REVELATION of the righteous judgment of God ;" implying, that immediately on the arrival of this day, that righteous judgment which till then had been in abeyance, will burst forth upon " the world of the ungodly ;" and not *temporal*, but " *eternal* judgment—for as soon as that day arrives and reveals his wrath, God shall judge the SECRETS" of the heart, and " the secrets of MEN" indiscriminately, " by Jesus Christ." How, then, is it possible to doubt that the judgment here described will be *one unbroken continuous trial of men's hearts*, righteous and wicked together?

The same truth is unequivocally expressed in

> 2 Cor. v. 9–11: "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must *all* appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that *every one* may receive the deeds done in the body, according to that he hath done, *whether good or bad.* Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

How can it be doubted, in the face of such a passage as this, that righteous and wicked will be sisted before one and the same judgment-seat of Christ, at one and the same time; that the judgment on both classes will be strictly *personal* and in its issues *eternal;* and that the anticipation of judgment, *in this precise view of it*, was the grand spring of action in the apostle's own mind, and what he wished all others to share with him in?

So in

> 1 Cor. iv. 5: "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will *bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God.*"

If this passage does not inform us that the object of Christ's coming will be to lay bare the secrets of men's hearts, for the express purpose of passing sentence upon them accordingly, and that this will be done alike upon all classes, the faithful and the unfaithful, the honest and the hypocritical, alike—*what does it declare?*

> 2 Thess. i. 6–10: "Seeing it is a right thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven* with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking

> vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; *who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of our Lord, and from the glory of his power;* WHEN HE SHALL COME TO BE GLORIFIED IN HIS SAINTS, and to be admired in all them that have believed* (because our testimony among you was believed), *in that day.*"

Here we have something to be done both to saints and to sinners, and the express time for the doing of both We have also a double expression, both of *what* is to be done to each party, and of the *time.* To "them that trouble" believers, he "will recompense tribulation." Of what sort? "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction." But "to those who are troubled, he will recompense rest," yea, he will "be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe." So much for *what* is to be done to each. Now for the *time.* Both parties are to be "recompensed" at the same time—the troublers with tribulation, the troubled with rest—"WHEN the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven." This is again, and yet again repeated. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, *taking vengeance*" —not to take it some thousand years thereafter—but *with* that "flaming fire" of his "vengeance," he will burst upon the world of the ungodly at his second coming. And lest it should be said that this "vengeance" may mean merely public judgments upon anti-christian *nations*—a turn to give to the words as absurd as it is offensive, yet by no means uncommon—as if to cut off every such meagre view, the apostle adds, "who shall be punished with *everlasting destruction from the presence* of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," and once more he notes the time— "WHEN *he shall come to be* glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that have believed;" and as if even this were not enough, he adds, after a parenthesis, "*in that day.*" If such emphatic reiterations of the same thing, in every form of language the most vivid, be not sufficient—if after this the judgment of righteous and wicked together, and both, "at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven," be questioned—it seems difficult to conceive what way of expressing this truth would be deemed sufficient. If the apostle had been writing expressly against the notion of a *divided* judgment—a judgment of each class separately, and with an interval between them of a thousand years—it is not easy to see how he could have expressed the *reverse* of this more clearly and more emphatically than this passage does. And yet this is got over by pre-millennialists.

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* τ. πιστευσαο . So all the critical editions

> 1 Cor. iii. 12–15: "If any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble: every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

Here "*the day*" of Christ's second coming is said to be "*revealed by fire;*" just as in the preceding passage it is said, "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire." This fire shall be applied to the "building" which every professed Christian has erected upon Christ, the true "foundation," for the purpose of testing the soundness of the materials employed. The worthless materials are termed "*wood, hay, stubble,*" which, being all combustible, "shall be burned." The valuable materials are styled, "*gold, silver, precious stones*," which stand the fire, and so will come out from the fiery test, to which they are to be subjected, uninjured. Thus, "*every man's* work shall be made manifest: for *the day* shall declare it, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." As this fiery test will discover who are true members of Christ, and who are hypocrites, so will it separate the chaff from the wheat in Christ's own people, some of whom will "*scarcely* be saved." This fire, then, is to test the righteous and the wicked together, at "the *revelation* of the day of Christ;" and shall we say, that though this test will be applied in the day of Christ's coming to all the *righteous* that have ever lived, it will not be then applied to all the *wicked*, but only to so many of them as shall be found living when Christ comes, leaving all the rest for a thousand years undisturbed in their graves, thereafter to be tried in a party by themselves? Surely this is a very preposterous turn to give to the passage.*

Col. i. 28: "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching

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* I am aware of the reference to *doctrines* in this passage, as the thing more immediately intended by the "wood, hay, stubble," &c., and these too as introduced by men "holding the Head"—building on "the true foundation." In that view, the passage is deeply instructive. But he who stops short at this point, and fancies that he has exhausted the whole scope and object of the passage when he has brought out its bearings on doctrine, has taken but a feeble grasp of it. The *personal* bearings of the passage we shall do well not to miss, for they are as searching and solemn as they are obvious. When the fire has burned up all that is combustible about some of us, how much will remain? "As a shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs or a piece of an ear," so shall some be then saved. Fiery tests are, indeed, from time to time applied to men here; and by these, strange discoveries are sometimes made, by which "the last become first and the first last." Premonitions these are, and rehearsals on a small scale of the revelations of the great day. "The Lord grant that we may find mercy of the Lord in that day!"

> every man in all wisdom; that we may present* every man† perfect in Christ Jesus."

Here Paul does not *assert*, but *takes it for granted*, that he and other ministers will be confronted with all the people to whom they have ministered in the day of Christ's appearing—embracing of course both classes of them—and tells us how he agonized in order to be able to give a good account of "every man" that had been the object of his labours; not of his genuine converts in their *presence*, and of the rejecters of his message in their *absence*—while rotting in their graves, or at some long subsequent resurrection and judgment of the wicked—but that he might be able to present them all perfect in Christ, which implies surely that he might have a very different presentation to make of some from others, in that day.

So in

> Heb. xiii. 17: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they keep watch (*αγρυπνοῦσιν*) for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."
>
> 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy."

In the first of these passages the people are reminded that their spiritual guides have to give an account of them individually, and that it might be one either of joy or of grief, according to the class they should be found in at the great day. In the other passage the apostle refers to the joy he would experience, and the crown he would receive, as the spiritual father of his Thessalonian converts, when he met them at the coming of their common Lord.

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* *Παραστησωμεν*. This is the *presentation* of the Church to Christ at his coming, which we have found to be a favourite idea with more than one apostle. See chap. iv., pp. 57–61.

† *Παντα ανθρωπον*, thrice repeated in one verse. Hoc (says Bengel) toties positum maximam habet *δεινοτητα* ac vim.

> 1 John ii. 28; iv. 17: "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be *ashamed before him at his coming*. . . . . . . Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have *boldness in the day of judgment;* because as he is, so are we in this world."
>
> Rev. iii. 5: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not *blot out* his name out of the book of life, but I will *confess* his name before my Father, and before his angels."
>
> 1 Tim. v. 24, 25: "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some they follow after. Likewise the good works [of some] are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid."
>
> Rom. xiv. 10, 12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? . . . for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. . . . So then *every one of us* shall give account of himself to God"—namely, "before the judgment-seat of Christ."

Leaving these passages to speak for themselves, I conclude these testimonies to the simultaneous judgment of the righteous and the wicked with two of the grandest descriptions, but scarcely requiring illustration.

> 2 Pet. iii, 7, 10, 12: "But the heavens and the earth which are now, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against *the day of judgment and of the perdition of ungodly men*. . . . But *the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;* IN THE WHICH (εν ᾗ) the heavens shall pass away," &c. . . . "Looking for and hasting unto *the coming of the day of God, in consequence of which* (δι ἣν)* the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved."

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* A remarkable turn of expression. We may compare with it Rev.

Here "the day of judgment," and even "the *coming* of that day, as a thief in the night," is spoken of as one, in point of time, with "the perdition of ungodly men," and both with the dissolution of the heavens and the earth. How, then, can it be maintained that this "perdition of ungodly men" will be a thousand years later than the coming of Christ? The usual reply to this is, that the passage speaks only of such "ungodly" as shall be alive when Christ comes. Even if we should admit this, do those who adopt it believe in any such "*perdition of ungodly men*" when Christ comes, as involves a strictly *personal judgment* of the "secrets of their hearts?" Do they believe that this "perdition" will be the execution of the sentence passed upon them after such judgment, and that it will consequently be not any sweeping acts of vengeance upon public bodies or masses of men, but their "*everlasting destruction* from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power?" In a word, do they believe that it will be such a judgment as leaves not one of the condemned to escape? If so, what becomes of the notion of "*remnants*" of these very "ungodly men" spared to "stock the new earth," "converted by this judgment," and made missionaries to the heathen world?

Another theory has been devised for solving these inextricable difficulties, namely, that as the day of judgment is to last a thousand years, the perdition of ungodly men may be said to take place "*in the day in which* the heavens are dissolved," though it do not take place till the *end* of

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xx. 11, "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, *from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away*;" also 2 Thess. i. 9, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction *from the presence* (or *face*) *of the Lord*, and from the glory of his power." "This fact (says BENGEL) will be intolerable to the wicked: They shall not *see*, but they shall *feel* it." So in our passage, he speaks as if the heavens would kindle at the presence, or under the influence, of "that day."

it. This is *Mr. Burgh's* view. to whose statement I shall have something to say in the following chapter.

The last passage, though already given, I must here transcribe in full·

> Rev. xx. 11–15: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before the throne: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hades delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

On this passage I observed, that if ever language expressed the doctrine of *a simultaneous and universal* RESURRECTION, surely we have it here. I would now add, that if language be capable of expressing the doctrine of a *simultaneous and universal* JUDGMENT, it is undoubtedly expressed here. But I will not try to make plainer by comments, what is so very plain without them. I would merely request the reader to glance again over what was said on this passage in connexion with the *Resurrection* (pp. 210–217).

One other passage—omitted in its proper place—I may be permitted to add here:

> 2 Tim. iv. 1: "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, Preach the word," &c.

The "judgment of quick and dead" is an expression thrice used in the New Testament: once (Acts x. 42) in connexion with the *Person* who is to do it—"It is he (Christ) who is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead;" again (1 Pet. iv. 6), in connexion with the *nearness* of it—"Who is *ready* to judge the quick and the dead;"* and here, in connexion with the *time* of it—"Who shall judge the quick and the dead *at his appearing and his kingdom*"

The "kingdom" here is unquestionably that of *glory:* sometimes called the kingdom of our *Father*—"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in THE KINGDOM OF THEIR FATHER" (Matt. xiii. 43); sometimes called the kingdom of *Christ*—"So an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST" (2 Pet. i. 11); and sometimes the kingdom of *both the Father and the Son*—"No whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor idolater, hath any inheritance in THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AND OF GOD" (Eph. v. 5). In this sense of it, "Christ's *appearing* and his *kingdom*" are ever associated in point of *time;* as when Paul charged the Thessalonians that they would "walk worthy of God, who had called them to *his kingdom and glory*" (1 Thess. ii. 12).†

Well, it is at this, "his appearing and kingdom," that Christ is to "judge the quick and the dead"—not "the quick" at his appearing, and "the dead" a thousand years thereafter; but the quick and the dead together, and of both classes, "*at* his appearing and his kingdom."

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* Paratus est Judex: nam, evangelio prædicato, nil nisi finis restat. —(BENGEL.)

† *Βασιλειαν και δοξαν· regnum et gloriam:* Magnificum συνθετον, says BENGEL. Though here called "*God's* kingdom," the identity of it with that which is called *Christ's*, is too manifest to admit of doubt.

And now what have we found on this head of THE JUDGMENT?

1. We have found that the pre-millennialists are constrained to admit, in one form or other, that Christ, when he comes the second time, *will come to judge the world.* But,

2. As their system does not admit of any *general judgment*—any judgment of the whole world at once—we have found them obliged to parcel out the judgment, not only into separate acts or processes, distant from each other by long periods of time, but into heterogeneous transactions, that cannot be brought under one category; and to call the whole period of the thousand years "*the day of judgment.*" Thus,

They make the judgments upon the anti-christian nations which are to usher in the millennium to be part of "the judgment of the great day;" they style these the "judgment of *the quick;*" and by many of them they are identified with the judgment so inimitably described in the 25th of Matthew. Now, either this is the personal and eternal judgment of those nations, or it is not. If it be *not*, it is absurd to call it "the judgment of the quick," and such an application of that phrase is fitted only to mislead. But if these pre-millennial judgments upon the anti-christian nations be all the judgment that is ever to pass upon their immortal souls, then how come "remnants" of them to be *spared* in those judgments; nay *converted* by what to them is "the judgment of the great day," and made instruments, during the millennium, of converting others? Was ever a wilder, and I will add, a more dangerous speculation gravely put forth by good men? Farther,

They make the millennial rule, administration, or government of Christ—which in Scripture is doubtless called by the *name* of "judgment," just as *all rule* is—this also they make part of "the judgment of the great day." Of course it cannot be pretended, that this is of the nature of a *judicial trial* of men's *previous* state and character for eternity. So that, during great part of their thousand years' day of judgment, there is to be no judgment at all, in the only sense in which Christ is said to *come to judgment.* They may try to give it something of that character, by telling us, as they do, of the *instant death* with which all outbreakings of evil during the millennium will be visited. But he who can persuade himself that *such* judgments—allowing there were more ground to look for them than has yet been produced—will make the millennium to be "the great day of judgment," must be easily convinced. And then,

By placing the judgment of the righteous *before*, and that of the wicked *after* the millennium, they make the last judgment, so majestically described in the 20th of Revelation, to be a judgment of *one class* only; and they make "the book of life" to be produced and opened for no other purpose but to condemn *all* that are then judged, as not having their names written in it: Thus are they driven to do manifest violence to that whole scene. But,

3. We have found that even this thousand years' day of judgment is *not long enough* to serve their purpose; and that, to help them over the work which they put into this period, it would require to be made *longer still.* For, not to speak of the judgment of the righteous, which they represent as *prior* to the thousand years, and therefore no part of *the day's* work, strictly speaking; the judgment of the wicked, instead of taking place *within* the millennial period, does not take place till after it has so entirely run out, that even "*the little season*" which succeeds it—and

which we found reason to believe would be, relatively, *not so very little*—would be exhausted ere it takes place. And thus, by no fair stretch of language, are they warranted to say that *such* a judgment will take place *in any part* of the millennial day. This singular scheme, then, of a thousand years' day of judgment—so very unlike a true view of the judgment-day—fails to meet the case which it was invented to suit, and must, independent of other objections, be given up even on this ground.

4. This whole scheme of the judgment makes no provision whatever—nor does it pretend to make any—for judging the vast multitudes of believing men by whom the world is to be peopled during the millennium. They are not among those judged *before* the millennium, for they are not then born ; and they are not among those judged *after* it, for none but the wicked are expected to be judged then. And so *they are not judged at all;* that is to say, this scheme *makes no provision* for their being judged.

Thus the pre-millennial scheme of the judgment falls out at every turn, and presents such *gaps* as to expose to the impartial eye its fatal deficiencies. While it is too *artificial* and *complicated* to look like a true doctrine, its supporters have not been able, with all the pains they have taken to adjust it, to provide for the judgment of the whole human race. Tried by its theory of the judgment, then, the pre-millennial scheme is found wanting; and, if wanting *here*, it must be given up. But,

5. In contrast with this, how unencumbered, how majestic, how self-approving, and—as we have abundantly shown—how conformable to all Scripture, is the doctrine of *a simultaneous and universal judgment of all mankind at the coming of Christ!* The passages we have adduced

prove beyond all reasonable doubt, that the whole human family will at once stand before the bar of Christ in their resurrection-state, and that the judgment then held and pronounced will be one continuous, unbroken transaction. And, if this be the case, the pre-millennial scheme must be abandoned.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CONFLAGRATION, AND THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH, AT THE COMING OF CHRIST.

THERE is probably nothing in Scripture so hard to bend to the pre-millennial doctrine as that which relates to the conflagration and its issues, as announced in the following well-known verses:—

> 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10–13: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief [in the night];* in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, in consequence of which† the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."
>
> Rev. xx. 11: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."

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* *Gries. Sch. Lach. & Tisch.* omit *εν νυκτι.*

† See note, pp. 284, 285.

Rev. xxi. 1: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

The pre-millennial theory will never survive the reception of these passages in their plain and obvious sense. They describe a conflagration to take place when Christ appears the second time, which it is utterly inconceivable should occur before the millennium.

I. When we turn to the descriptions of the world's condition in the latter day, we not only find no intimation of such a change as is here described, but every thing to prove that there neither will nor can be such a pre-millennial revolution upon the globe we inhabit. Earth and sea are precisely where they were, and what they were. Not a place disappears; not a feature of any thing is changed. Not to speak of Assyria and Egypt, Elam and Shinar, Pathros and Cush, Hamath, and the islands of the sea,—the borders of Palestine are given with the minutest geographical and topographical precision, as if nothing had happened to disturb them. Mount Zion is still the mount it ever was; and Engedi, and En-eglaim, and "the way of Hethlon, as men go to Zedad," and Gilead and Jordan, and the waters of strife in Kadesh and the Great Sea (Ezek. xlvii.), and every place, as it was. Nay, what may be called the meteorological features of every country remain precisely as before. Any nation of the earth, not coming up to Jerusalem to worship, upon them is to be no *rain.* But whereas "the family of Egypt have no rain"—their land being watered by the bounteous Nile—some other plague is to visit them. "If the family of Egypt go not up, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen," &c. (Zech. xiv. 17, 18)

So much for the physical condition of the earth, and of all that contributes to make and keep it what it is. But we find its *inhabitants* as unaffected as itself by any such conflagration as Peter describes. We find Jews and Gentiles transacting their affairs, secular and religious, precisely as before, and without the briefest interruption.

Now, what are we to make of all this? It is met in several ways, all equally at variance with the express statements of the passages before us.

1. Some, finding the sheer impossibility of believing that *such* a conflagration as Peter predicts is consistent with the unaltered condition of the earth and its inhabitants during the millennium, candidly admit that it cannot be pre-millennial, and agree with us in referring it to the close of the thousand years. Such are Mr. Burgh, Mr. Tyso, and Mr. Ogilvy.

> "If," says *Mr. Burgh*, "the general conflagration takes place at the *commencement* of the millennial reign, it follows that the nature and object of that reign must be completely altered, and that the scriptural descriptions of the millennium can no longer hold; for, during the millennial reign, we are told that the inhabitants of the earth will be still in mortal flesh, and their national distinctions still maintained; the great object of Christ's reign on earth during the thousand years being, as I have said, to carry Christianity into effect in this world, to gather to himself all the nations of the earth, and bring about their conversion. I ask, How could this be? How could the nations of the earth continue to exist as men, and under these circumstances, if the general conflagration had taken place at the descent of the Lord from heaven?"*

But how, you ask, does he reconcile this attempt to place the conflagration a thousand years after Christ's coming, with those words of the apostle emphatically connecting it with the very *act* of his coming?—" The day of the

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* Lect. on Rev. *ut supra*, p. 373.

Lord will come as a thief in the night, *in the which* the heavens shall pass away," &c. All the answer we get to this question is, that this "day" is a thousand years long, and as it is only "*in* the day," it may be as well at the end as at the beginning of it.* This, however, will never do, for it runs counter to the express object of the apostle in introducing the subject. He had been warning them against the scoffers who would deride the expectation of Christ's coming, or of a day of judgment—reminding them that the old world had been destroyed by water, and intimating that "the heavens and the earth, that are now, are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and of the perdition of ungodly men;" and having explained the merciful design of God in delaying this fire, and the execution of his vengeance against the ungodly—from which men flatter themselves that it will never come—he warns such that it will burst upon them when least expected. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away," &c. Manifestly, therefore, it is the conflagration itself which is to take the world by surprise, bursting upon it "with a rushing noise" (ροιζηδον), just as the antediluvians "knew not until the flood came and destroyed them all." No thousand years, therefore, are to intervene between "the day of the Lord" and "the passing away of the heavens." Nor, indeed, would a thousand years' interval save the theory, since, as we have seen, the last judgment is *outside of the thousand years altogether*, and even after the expiry of the "little period" which succeeds the thousand years.

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* "It may indeed be objected, that in 2 Pet. iii., where the conflagration of the present world is mentioned as followed by new heavens and a new earth, these events seem to be identified with the 'coming' of the Lord:—"looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, WHEREIN the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved,' &c.—(12, 13.) It, however, requires but little examination into the other places where these expressions, 'coming of the Lord,' and 'day of the Lord,' occur, to show that they are far from denoting, the one merely the *descent* or *appearing* of the Lord, and the other a literal '*day.*' The word rendered 'coming,' is in fact '*the being present,*' (παρουσια, not επιφανεια), and the 'day of God' and the 'day of judgment' may easily be shown to be designations of the whole period of Christ's reign, when 'executing justice and judgment in the earth.' *It is then clear, that if the conflagration and new creation take place in any part of this 'day of the Lord,' the apostle's words hold true.*"—Pp. 375, 376.

2. Others, constrained to admit that the conflagration and the second advent are contemporaneous, and taking both to be pre-millennial, explain the conflagration in a *contracted* sense, as extending no farther than the *prophetic* earth, or the territory of old Rome.

"As to the grand difficulty," says *Mr. Elliott*, "in the way of this (pre-millennial) theory, which has been supposed to arise out of St. Peter's description of the earth's being burnt up before the promised new heavens and new earth, I shall only suggest, as others before me, that the γη, or *earth*, of the apostle's conflagration is by no means certainly *the whole habitable world* (indeed the parallel prophecy of Isa. lxv. 17, 18, lxvi. 22, &c., seems to forbid it); or, in fact, any other than the *Roman earth*, which we have seen on Apocalyptic evidence is to be destroyed pre-millennially by fire at the time of Antichrist's destruction. . . . . . It would seem that in this state of things and of (sceptical) feeling (in regard to the coming of Christ) in professing Christendom, all suddenly and unexpectedly, and conspicuous over the world as the lightning that shineth from the east even to the west, the second advent and appearing of Christ will take place. . . . Meanwhile it would also appear, that with a tremendous earthquake accompanying, of violence unknown since the revolutions of primæval chaos (an earthquake under which the *Roman world* at least is to reel to and fro like a drunken man), the solid crust of this earth shall be broken, and fountains burst forth from its inner deep, not as once of water, but of liquid fire. . . . . that this, I say, shall then burst forth and engulph the vast territory of the *Papal Babylon*, and the godless of *its* inhabitants; thence spreading *even to Palestine*, and every

> where, as in the case of Sodom, making the very elements to melt with fervent heat; and that there (in Palestine) the flame shall consume *the Antichrist and his confederate kings*, while the sword also does its work of slaughter. . . . And then immediately, it would seem also, the renovation of this our earth is to take place; its soil being purified by the very action of the fire, in all that shall remain of it, for 'the nations of the saved,' that is, the Gentile remnant and restored Israel," &c.—(*Hor. Apoc.* iv. 217, 221, 222, 224–227, *ut supra.*)
>
> "It is well known," adds Mr. Elliott in a note, "that the words γη and οικουμενη are often used in a limited sense of *Judæa* or the *Roman earth*, just as the Romans themselves call their world the *orbis terrarum:* and, after careful consideration of the various prophetic descriptions of the consummation, I incline to think that the meaning of the term, when used in these prophecies of the concluding revolutions of the earth on Christ's advent, is thus limited, and that it refers to *the Roman world alone*; with this modification, moreover, that the circumstance of the separation of the Eastern and Western Empire, and political destruction of the former by the Turkish invasion, having caused the phrase to be used in the later Apocalyptic prophecies of Western or Papal Christendom only, it may be so in those of the consummation also.—*The idea of* SOME OTHER *and more universal conflagration at the general judgment* IS NOT HEREBY EXCLUDED."

Mr. A. Bonar takes the same contracted view of the conflagration, as limited to *Christendom*, though its effects *may* be "felt all over the wide globe." After referring to Dan. vii. and Rev. xviii., which speak of the body of the fourth beast as given to the burning flame and of the smoke of Babylon's burning, and identifying this with the conflagration described in Peter, he says—

> "It appears to intimate that at the Lord's coming all that is called '*Babylon*'—in short, all *Christendom* become *Papal*—shall be one blaze of consuming fire. This tremendous fire shall purge

Europe from the filth of its destroyers more effectually than Joshua's sword did Canaan; and the (European?) soil thus cleansed shall soon receive a new race of inhabitants. It *may* be, too, that the effects of the conflagration shall be *felt* all over the wide globe, penetrating through the earth, and working that change on it appointed by the Lord. And thus, not the *heavens* only and the *elements*, but *earth* also and its works, are visited with fire. In Heb. xii. 26, God's voice is said to have shaken 'the earth' when it made *Sinai* tremble. On that day, not only did the skies above feel the tempest, but *earth* shook as the Lord came down. So it may be said that '*earth*' is flung into the crucible when Dan. vii. 11, and Rev. xviii. 9, are fulfilled"—that is, when *Papal Europe* only is 'flung into the crucible.'*

Mr. Bonar himself, however, seems to stagger at this miserable explanation of the conflagration in Peter.

"It may be," he candidly says, "we are wrong in supposing that the tremendous Sodom-doom of *Christendom* shall be what is meant by 'earth and its works' sharing in the fire that melts the elements; but even if so, what better can the anti-millennarian say?" (p. 119, 120.)†

Never, perhaps, was more palpable violence done to the text of Scripture, than by this singular attempt to limit the conflagration predicted by Peter to *Rome Papal*, or *Christendom*.‡ The whole context proclaims it a worldwide conflagration, and every clause of the passage itself seems framed on purpose to exclude all limitation. Scoffers, says the apostle, are to arise, who shall deride the expectation of Christ's coming, alleging that "all things have continued as they were *from the beginning*." To repel this, the apostle reminds them of the provision made from the first for the devastation of the old world by water. "By the word of God, the *heavens* were of old, and the *earth* standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the *world* that then was (ὁ τοτε κοσμος), being overflowed with water, perished." A like provision, he adds, has been made for the destruction of the world that now is by fire. "But *the heavens and the earth, that are now* (οἱ δε νον ουρανοι, και ἡ γη), are by the same word stored with fire, kept unto the day of judgment and of the perdition of ungodly men." * The analogy here so emphatically traced between "the world that then was," and "the heavens and the earth that are now"—the one "overflowed with water," the other doomed to the flames—precludes all reasonable doubt that *the whole world*, physically considered, is the subject of this prophecy, and the victim of the conflagration. To thrust in here *Rome Papal* or *Christendom*, is in the last degree unnatural.

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* Redempt., pp. 117, 118.

† The anti-millennarian difficulty to which Mr. Bonar alludes is the fact, that in Isa. lxv. 17, to which Peter refers, there are found Jerusalem and her people, houses and vineyards, after "the new heaven and new earth" which the prophet announces. On this supposed difficulty, I have merely to refer the reader to pp. 179–189.

‡ The excellent *Mr. Maitland* (of Brighton), and others, limit the "every eye" that "shall see" the Redeemer at his second coming, to every eye in *Christendom!*

But when we examine the detailed description of this conflagration in the subsequent verses, it seems inconceivable how any impartial expositor can put a limited sense upon it.

"*The* (sublunary and visible) *heavens shall pass away* (παρελευσονται) *with a great noise*," (ροιζηδον, the word conveying the idea): †

> "*The elements* (στοιχεια) *shall melt*," or "*be dissolved* (λυθησεται), *with fervent heat*."

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* So I incline, with Mr. Elliott, to render the words, connecting πυρι with τεθησαυρισμενοι preceding, and not with τηρουμενοι following; by which also the idea of a preparation within the bowels of the earth itself for its eventual destruction by fire, as before by water, is better conveyed.

† Peribunt magno impetu.—(GROT.) Mr. Elliott's illustration from

The "heavens" and the "elements" seem to be here distinguished very much as "the earth" and "the works that are therein" afterwards are. Whatever "elements" mean here, as contradistinguished from the "heavens," it must be something, the "*dissolution*" of which would incapacitate human beings, as at present constituted, from subsisting for a moment. What, then, becomes of the theory of *mortal men* tenanting the new heavens and the new earth? It is nothing better than a dream.

"*The earth and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.*"* "The earth," as here distinguished from "the works that are therein," doubtless means the *body* of the globe as distinguished from all that adorns its *surface*. If this is to be "*burnt up*," it must surely be something greatly more *searching* and *fundamental* than the mere "paring and burning" process to which Mr. Elliott, in the foregoing passage, and others, as we shall see, appear nothing loath to debase this magnificent prediction.

> "Seeing then that *all these things shall be dissolved* (λυομενων). . . . Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, in consequence of which *the heavens being on fire*† *shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.*"
>
> "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for *new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*"

This crowns the description, and completes the evidence against a *limited* conflagration. For, as "the new heavens

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the noise and shock of the earthquake which accompanied the volcanic eruption at *Sumbawa* in 1815, and which he tells us was felt and heard 970 miles off, seems to me to be a very good illustration of the *bathos*, but of nothing else.

* Κατακαησεται, "shall be burned *down*;" the Latins would say *exurentur*, "shall be burnt *out*;" while we say, "shall be burnt *up*:" the idea of *complete consumption* being alike conveyed by all these forms of expression.

† Πυρουμενοι, fusi igne ut metalla fundi solent: צפוררם, Ps. xii. 7; Es. i. 25; Dan. xii. 7; Zach. xii. 9, &c. (GROT.)

and the new earth' come in the room of "the heavens and the earth that are now," if the latter are to be subjected to the action of fire to the extent only of Rome Papal or Christendom, the *renovation* must be equally limited. But as the brethren whose views of this passage we have been examining contend for a renovation of *the whole earth*, they must give up their limited conflagration, or explain this passage in the most capricious and inconsistent style.

These and similar considerations seem indeed to press upon their own minds, insomuch that at the very time they are endeavouring to *narrow* this conflagration as much as possible, in order to avoid the fatal difficulties it would otherwise occasion them, they do reluctant homage to the scriptural and almost unanimous expectation of a *universal* conflagration. Thus Mr. Elliott says, in the passage already quoted: "The idea of *some other* and *more universal* conflagration at the general judgment is not hereby *excluded.*" But where shall we find any "other conflagration," and "more universal" than this, described in Scripture? Nowhere. This is beyond all comparison the most "universal" conflagration announced in the Bible: and, even if there were any other worthy of being compared with it, Mr. Elliott and those who think with him would be sure to make it pre-millennial, as they do this. The above admission, therefore, "keeps the word of promise to the ear, but breaks it to the hope." It gives the author the benefit of apparently *admitting* what he must be held to *deny*—a universal conflagration.* In like manner we have seen that Mr. A. Bonar does homage to the universality—in some sense—of the conflagration, while contending that its action is limited to "Europe." "It *may* be," he cautiously says, "that the *effects* of the conflagration shall be *felt* all over the wide world, penetrating through the earth, and working that change on it appointed by the Lord." This is just the best effort which that estimable brother could make, to graft what every one perceives to be the sense of the passage upon a sense of it the most inadequate and unnatural: Indeed, it would be difficult to extract from it any definite meaning.

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* That Mr. Elliott, despite his admission, does not believe in any "more universal conflagration at the general judgment," is plain from that part of his book in which he treats of the close of the millennium. Nothing of the sort is so much as hinted at, and even the general judgment itself is left mysteriously unapproached.

Thus *sweeping*, then, and thus *penetrating*, is this conflagration announced so magnificently by the apostle Peter; so *all-involving* and *all-reducing*, that many able critics and divines conceive it to express a total annihilation—of *substance* as well as *form.* The Lutheran divines for the most part maintained this, but were opposed with great force of argument by the Reformed; who contended that so far from the annihilation of our physical system, in its primary elements, being here expressed or implied, the reverse is rather conveyed—the dissolution of its present physical constitution only, and its re-constitution under new and higher laws. With them agreed such of our own divines as had occasion to touch upon the point, as will be seen from the extracts given below.* But the very existence of such a controversy shows how very far the predicted change was, on all hands, felt to go.

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* "We take it for granted," says DURHAM (on Rev. xxi. 1), "that there is not to be a full annihilation of this universe by this change . . . . . yea this exception, that '*there shall be no more sea*,' confirmeth it; for it supposeth somewhat more to befall *it* than 'the heaven and the earth,' which could not be if the annihilation of all were absolute. The question therefore lieth mainly in this, whether that change be *substantial*, so that these heavens and this earth being removed, there are new heavens and new earth again *created;* or whether that change be but in respect of *qualities*, as it is with respect to the body of man, which is raised the same as to its substance, yet so as to its qualities it may be called another, for its spiritualness, purity, glory, incorruptibleness, &c. . . . We conceive this last to be truth—that as the heavens and earth

3. An attempt has been made to form, out of the two

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are not substantially changed or annihilated, so the new earth and heaven succeeding are the same for substance, but for nature more stable, for beauty more glorious, for use free from the abuses sinful men put them unto, and from the effects of the curse put upon them for man's sin—they are altogether freed and set at liberty from these. Therefore (Acts iii. 21,) it is called 'the time of the *restitution of all things*.' For confirmation whereof, we may consider these places wherein this change is most expressly mentioned: As Ps. cii. 26, with Heb. i. 10, 12; 1 Cor. vii. 31; 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12, 13; . . . . and that famous place, Rom. viii. 19–22, where the scope purposely is to prove the glorious condition the saints have to expect after this, and that such as even senseless creatures wait and long for, as being to be made partakers of it at the general manifestation of the sons of God; where observe, 1. That by '*creature*,' in the singular number (v. 19, 20,) is understood the *universe* as contradistinguished from the elect, and such a creature as by the sin of man is made subject to vanity; and so is not to be understood of the whole creation simply, as certainly neither of angels nor of the seat of the blessed* . . . . 3. That the 'creature' here mentioned is to be fully delivered from the effects of sin and the curse . . . . because (v. 21) it is expressly said that it is to be delivered from bondage, and to share of that liberty of the sons of God; and as *their* change is not substantial but qualitative—from the worse to the better—so shall it, in some proportionable suitable manner, be freed from changes, corruption, &c., and be in another way glorious. These excellent privileges waited for by the creature cannot consist either with annihilation or substantial change, but with a qualitative mutation far to the better, though we cannot in every thing satisfy our curiosity about it, neither should we aim at that."

"This liberty," says Brown (of Wamphray—banished 1662), "which the creature shall at that day enjoy, shall not be by its annihilation, or being reduced to nothing, as if all the glorious liberty of the sons of God, to which it shall be redeemed, were nothing else but a ceasing to be used by sinners as now it is; seeing we hear of a '*new heaven and a new earth*' (2 Pet. iii. 13), and that these shall only be '*changed*,' Ps. cii. 26," &c.—(*Expos of Ep. to Rom.*—on ch. viii. 19–22.)

* *Durham*, though expecting "the heavens and the earth that are now," after undergoing the conflagration, to "result in the new heavens and earth—as a refined lump from which the dross is taken away"—did not identify this with "the seat of the blessed," and was at a loss to know what was to be its destination.

former explanations of the conflagration, a third, by which some of the foregoing difficulties are avoided, though in a way not more to be approved in other respects. We mean the *breaking of it up*, as they do the Judgment, *into two or more conflagrations* on a small scale, no one of them interfering to any great extent with the previous state of things, but all of them together accomplishing the change described by Peter.

> "It does not," says *Mr. Bickersteth*, "appear decisively, from any thing in St. Peter's account, in what part of that 'day of judgment,' 'the day of the Lord, which is as a thousand years,' the general conflagration may take place; or whether there may not be, as some have supposed, a partial fire at the beginning (2 Thess. i. 7, 8; Rev. xix. 20), and another more complete at the close of that day. About the order of events foretold, and in what part of that order 'the new heavens and the new earth' will take place, there is much of that obscurity in which unfulfilled events are purposely left."*

As to this alleged obscurity regarding the time of the new heavens and new earth, it exists only in those minds which the pre-millennial theory puts out of all their reckonings on such matters. But, whereas here are introduced but *two* conflagrations, the following passage seems to speak of something more than this:

> "It is questioned," says Mr. Brooks, "what will be the process of this burning, namely, whether all at once, or by *gradual eruptions of volcanic matter*, and to what extent it will take place."†

The note here introduced we copy in part, to show *how low* in their conceptions of those "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," good men can descend when under the influence of the system we have been investigating.

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* Guide, p. 288.

† Elem., p. 239.

"Some," he says, "have argued, that the conflagration cannot be until the annihilation of the world, on the ground that the action of fire would render the soil unfit for the use of man. This is arguing in ignorance of the real facts of the case, even at present; *for unfruitful land is now often pared and burned to produce a soil*, and the soil *formed by triturated lava is excellent!*"

II. But we have still to ask, how the *inhabitants* of "the heavens and the earth that are now," are *tided over* this all-enveloping, all-reducing deluge of fire, into "the new heavens and the new earth," of which the most of them are to be the occupants, according to the pre-millennial theory. As to the *saints*—raised from the dead, or changed when Christ comes—there is no difficulty. Caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, they are safe enough from the conflagration, if in their risen state they could be in any danger from it.* The *ungodly*, too, are out of the way, at least the most of them; for they are *destroyed*, according to the pre-millennial theory, by the judgments that accompany the second advent.† But a "*remnant*" of this class is expected to *survive* the conflagration, and on the *new earth* to find themselves associated with the *Jewish* nation and the vast *Gentile* world. This "remnant," converted amidst these scenes, are to become missionaries to the Pagan world; while the Jews, by the personal appearing of Jesus to them as their Messiah, are to be brought to repentance and the acknowledgment of the truth. Thus, "the new earth" is to be tenanted by a world of men in the flesh, THE VAST MAJORITY OF WHOM, AT THE FIRST, ARE TOTAL STRANGERS TO CHRIST, AND DEAD IN TRESPASSES AND SINS. And this is "the new heavens and the new earth, WHEREIN DWELLETH RIGHTEOUSNESS," which "we, according to his promise, look for!" This statement of the apostle can have but one meaning. The "*righteousness*" which is to distinguish the *new* from the *old* earth does not surely mean *partial* righteousness, for that exists already on the old earth. It can only mean *absolute* or *unmixed* righteousness. All commentators agree in this.* But this theory does not even people the new earth with *prevailing* righteousness; for, until the Gentile world is brought over by the labours of the "remnant," the majority of mankind will be unbelievers. Who can possibly take this in? Nay, even after the millennial state of the earth is at its meridian, *hypocrisy* seems not to be excluded. "The subjection during the millennium," says Mr. Bickersteth, "not being a complete and full subjection of the heart to God, the *corruption of man* will, at its close, have a yet further manifestation. During the millennium the faithful are mingled with those who only yield a *feigned* obedience. The last open apostasy removes them from '*the earth*,

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* What **Mede** threw out as a modest conjecture in one of his letters, is now the general understanding of pre-millennialists on this subject. "What (says he) if this rapture of the saints be, that they may be preserved during the conflagration of the earth and the works thereof, 2 Pet. iii. 10, that as Noah and his family were preserved from the deluge by being lift up above the waters in the ark, so should the saints at the conflagration be lift up in the clouds unto their Ark, Christ, to be preserved from the deluge of fire, wherein the wicked shall be consumed?"—(P. 776.)

† If you ask, With what *kind* of destruction? You will get no satisfactory answer. Sometimes you would think it were by flames of fire breaking out upon them. But, judging from the prophecies to which they commonly refer, and the literal sense which they insist upon giving to them, they appear to expect one vast *carnage*—slaughter in a literal battle or battles—"the land soaked with *blood*," and "all the fowls filled with *flesh*." And this is what they term *the judgment of the quick*, or at least a principal part of it—miserable view!

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* IN ILLO STATU ERIT JUSTITIA PURA SINE VITIO; NON, UT IN HOC SÆCULO, BONI MALIS PERMIXTI. Huc spectat parabola Mat. xiii. 39, (30 ?).—(GROT.) ABSOLUTA TUM EXTABIT BONI ET MALI SEPARATIO. Matt. iii. 12, xiii. 30.—(BENG.)

wherein dwelleth righteousnsss, (so that they were upon 'the new earth' all the while.)" Nay, after the last judgment, as "no change is then mentioned as passing on the *Jewish nation*, or on the *living righteous*, who continue faithful to God," they "continue a seed to serve God in successive generations of the eternal state.* Of course, if this be the case, mortality and sin, the corruption of nature, and all the inseparable accompaniments of these things, remain for ever on the "new earth."

I have not touched upon the difficulty of mortal men surviving such a conflagration as we have found to be predicted by Peter. The attempts which have been made to get over that difficulty will never satisfy any dispassionate inquirer. The preservation of Noah's family from the waters of the deluge, and of the three Hebrew youths in the burning fiery furnace, together with the promise, "I am the Lord thy God . . . . and I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have *covered thee with the shadow of mine hand*, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people," (Isa. li. 16)—have been appealed to, but in vain.† I do not in the least question the *power* of God to preserve from fire as well as water, and a whole world as easily as three individuals. But Noah's flood of water was but *typical* of this deluge of fire, and the type ever comes short of the antitype. That was Christ's coming to judgment, *in a sort*, but not his second personal advent to pass "eternal judgment" upon men. Other differences will readily occur; but this is enough to show, that though there be a manifest *analogy* between the cases, the analogy must not be overdriven. As to the three youths, and the promise to "Zion" which we have quoted, though we should admit that it gave ground to expect the preservation of God's *covenant people* in the conflagration, what ground does it give to expect the preservation of God's *enemies?*

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* Lent Lect. for 1843, *ut supra*, pp. 330, 331.

† See *Birks* (Proph. Emp., *ut supra*, pp. 324, 325), and others.

Thus hopelessly opposed is the pre-millennial scheme to the Scripture testimony regarding the conflagration, and "the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." I have examined all the attempts at reconciliation deserving of notice, and shown them to be alike incompatible with the inspired descriptions of the change. On this head, therefore, nothing remains but to embody in a proposition, as under the previous heads, what is all but universally acknowledged as the truth on this branch of our subject.

PROPOSITION NINTH:

AT CHRIST'S SECOND APPEARING, "THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH THAT ARE NOW," BEING DISSOLVED BY FIRE, SHALL GIVE PLACE TO "NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH, WHEREIN DWELLETH RIGHTEOUSNESS" WITHOUT ANY MIXTURE OF SIN—GOOD UNALLOYED BY THE LEAST EVIL.

The observations already made sufficiently illustrate this proposition. But as I have been silent on one of the passages which we placed in the fore-front of this chapter, I may here state wherein its importance in the present argument appears to me to lie. I refer to Rev. xx. 11; xxi. 1; "*And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. . . . And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away; and there was no more sea.*"

That the change here described is *posterior* to the last judgment, and not *prior* to it, has been fully proved by writers on both sides of the millennial controversy—by *Mr. Birks*, for example, and by *Mr. Gipps*.* By putting this passage, then, in Revelation alongside of the passage in Peter, we obtain the following argument, which I believe it to be impossible to answer:—

The conflagration and passing away of the heavens will be "as a thief in the night, *in*" or "*at* the day of the Lord"—the time of his second advent. (2 Pet. iii.)

But the "fleeing" or "passing away" of "the earth and the heaven" is posterior to the last judgment, and consequently to the millennium. (Rev. xx., xxi.)

Therefore, the second advent is posterior to the millennium.

Here ends my chain of Scripture evidence against the pre-millennial theory.

We have seen that when Christ comes, the Church which he hath purchased with his own blood will be absolutely and numerically complete—admitting of no subsequent accessions.

We have seen that the Bible makes the hopes and the fears of all men to turn upon the second coming of Christ, as an event future to every human being, and makes no provision for the bringing in of any after it.

We have seen that baptism, and with it the gathering and training of disciples for glory, and the whole mediatorial power and presence of Christ for saving purposes, are ordained to continue till "the end of the world"—the admitted period of Christ's second coming—and not beyond it; and that, in the Lord's Supper, the Redeemer's death is to be showed forth only "till he come."

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* Birks' "Four Prophetic Empires," *ut supra*, p. 306, &c. Gipps' "First Resurrection," p. 13, note H; and see p. 67.

We have seen that the kingdom of Christ is just the kingdom of grace in the hands of the Mediator—a kingdom already in existence—virtually ever since the fall, and formally since his ascension to the right hand of power; and that it will continue unchanged, both in character and form, till the final judgment, when, in its state of glory, it becomes "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"—"the kingdom of Christ and of God."

We have seen that at Christ's second coming, his whole Church—"all that the Father hath given him"—shall be made alive at once, the dead being raised and the living changed; and that, at the same time, all the wicked shall stand up in a resurrection state—the whole human race appearing together before the great white throne.

We have seen that when Christ comes, the whole human race will be tried together for eternity at his judgment-seat.

Finally, we have seen that at Christ's second coming, the heavens and the earth that are now, being dissolved, shall disappear, and be succeeded by "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," without the least mixture of sin—good unalloyed by aught of evil.

Each of these Scripture views of the second advent is diametrically opposed to the pre-millennial theory, and subversive of it. Taken together, they form a chain of evidence against it of such strength, that, if rejected as insufficient, it will be hard to refute any error or to establish any truth from the word of God.

PART II.

THE MILLENNIUM.

CHAPTER I.

THE MILLENNIUM—HOW BROUGHT ABOUT.

If the pre-millennial theory be unscriptural, it must of course teach unscriptural views of the millennium as well as of the second advent. That it does so I now proceed to show under different heads, pointing out under each the opposite truth.

The first in order of these errors relates to the way in which the subjection of all nations to Christ is to be brought about.

The millennial conversion of the world to Christ is not expected to take place by the agencies now in operation, but altogether IN A NEW WAY.

That on which most dependence seems to be placed, is THE PERSONAL MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST; but to this are added *judgments on the Antichristian nations*, and a pentecostal *effusion of the Spirit.* On all these agencies they write with great looseness, and distressing are the sneers which they sometimes throw out at alleged attempts to convert the world by means of Bible and Missionary Societies, and their ill-disguised insinuations—sometimes not disguised at all—against the WORD and the blessed SPIRIT themselves, as inadequate to accomplish the predicted evangelization of the world.

"The more common opinion," says *Dr. M'Neile*, "is, that this is the final dispensation, and that by a more copious outpouring of the Holy Spirit it will magnify itself, and swell into the universal blessedness predicted by the prophets, carrying with it Jews and Gentiles, even the whole world, in one glorious flock under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ the Lord. *This is reiterated from pulpit, press, and platform.* It is the usual climax of missionary exhortation, or rather missionary prophecy."*

"Multitudes of professors of religion," says *Mr. Brooks*, "are at this time under a delusion in regard to the nature of those events which are impending over the Church of Christ. The generality are agreed that a great crisis is at hand, and likewise that we are on the eve of the millennium; but the party just alluded to are disposed to think, that . . . we are to *glide into it, as it were, by the instrumentality of our various* institutions for evangelizing the heathen; by means of which there will be a *gradual increasing diffusion of scriptural light*, until the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea—(Isa. xi. 9.) . . . . As regards, however, the kingdom of Christ, *which is the millennial kingdom*,† the testimony of Scripture is most abundant to the fact, that it is to be ushered in by desolating judgments; and that the universal prevalence of religion hereafter to be enjoyed, *is not to be effected by any increased impetus given by* THE PRESENT *means of evangelizing the nations*, but by a stupendous display of Divine wrath upon all the apostate and ungodly." ‡

"The Scriptures," says *Mr. Tyso*, "do state the design of *the Gospel*, and what it is to effect; but they never say *it is to convert the world. Its powers have been tried for eighteen hundred years*, and it has never yet truly converted one nation, one city, one town, nor even a single village. Yet some Christians are vainly supposing that it will, 'by a gradual and accelerated progression,' convert the world. . . . . The Scriptures never state that *the*

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* Lect. on the Jews, *ut supra*, p. 72.

† Note here, by the way, this naked acknowledgment, that Christ's kingdom is *not yet in being.* Attempts are now made to represent this as no part of the pre-millennial creed; but whether this can be said of the author of *Abdiel's Essays*, at least let the reader judge from the above extract.

‡ Elem. of Proph. Interp. pp. 227, 228.

Gospel, or *Christian economy*, will be the means of converting the world. . . . . That the world is to be converted is evident from many Scriptures; but they ascribe it *principally* to *other causes*, and not, as our opponents will have, *entirely* to *the preaching of the Gospel.* In all cases the Jews will have a pre-eminence. 'To the Jews first;' and their restoration will be to the Gentiles as life from the dead," &c.*

"The Christian," says *Mr. Ogilvy*,† "sees this command written in ligible characters, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,' and he feels it to be his duty to do so, for he does not know who may or who may not receive it; but he does not find it dead, and *your preaching shall sooner or later convert the whole world; therefore he does not draw that conclusion.* . . . . He further finds that the kingdom and universal Church are to be established, *not by gradual conversion, or by conversion more or less rapid under this dispensation*, BUT BY THE PERSONAL ADVENT *of our Lord himself, and all the remarkable* EVENTS *that accompany it.*"‡

Can any thing be looser than these statements, or more painful than the inferences which they suggest? A few paragraphs will put the matter upon its right footing.

1. The question here is not, Whether the conversion of the world is to be quick or slow, gradual or instantaneous; but, Will the *means* of effecting the predicted changes be the same as are now in operation, or will they be different? Will the *cause* of them be the same as of conversions *now*, or will it not? Nor let these writers shelter themselves under such ex-

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* Defence of the Personal Reign of Christ, pp. 41, 42. 1841. Another work of this author is most favourably noticed in the "*Investigator of Prophecy*," though on some points the writers differ.

† Mr. Bickersteth specially notices the omission of all reference to this author in my former edition. I had not then read it; but having since procured it, and found nothing new in it, I content myself with an occasional reference to it, just to show that on such a point as this the sentiment ascribed to pre-millennialists is not peculiar to one or two writers.

‡ Popular Objections to the Pre-millennial Advent Considered. By Geo. Ogilvy, Esq., pp. 216, 217. Second edition. 1847.

pressions as "our various institutions for evangelizing the heathen"—"the present means of evangelizing the nations." These, they know well, are but vehicles for conveying *the Gospel* to a world of perishing sinners; and as they find no fault with them as such, and never hint that their inadequacy to convert the world lies in the defective or unscriptural way in which they are wrought, it is plain that by "the institutions for evangelizing the heathen"—"the present means of evangelizing the nations,"—they just mean *the Gospel itself* in any way that the Church can now convey it to the world. Accordingly one of the writers we have quoted explicitly states, not that our Bible and missionary societies have failed, but that the gospel itself has failed, to accomplish any general conversion—for want of *power* to effect it. "Its *powers* have been tried for eighteen hundred years," and this is the result. But even this writer is forced to soften down his language in the end. The world's conversion is to take place "*principally*" through these "other causes;" nay, it is only "not entirely" to be brought about by "the preaching of the Gospel." And this he follows up by telling us of the pre-eminence the Jews are to have, and how their recovery is to be to the Gentile world as life from the dead. What matters it to our question in what order the thing takes place, and what special influence in forwarding it particular events may have? The one question is, "Will this general conversion, come when and by what instrumentality it may, consist, as conversion now does, of the *reception by sinners of a preached Gospel?*"

The *Messrs. Bonar*, indeed, seem to hold that it will, and so to admit all we ask. But—so far as I am able to understand their language—it is but a more subtle way of saying the same thing.

"The Gospel (says Mr. A Bonar) is the instrument in the Lord's hand for converting the world—it will always be the one instrument in the Spirit's hand." But he does not design "so to use it *at present*"—"*in this dispensation that precedes the Lord's coming:*" and to look for it before Christ come is but "*a visionary hope*," which missionaries should not cherish. He has heard missionaries "regret deeply that the Church at home should be *dazzled by the vain hope* of conversions on a grand scale." If the missionary would "see that *the gathering out of the elect is his sole hope*," he would be "far less disheartened by opposition than when he *vainly expected every day to see symptoms of national and universal conversion*." And if "it would be wrong, grievously wrong, to say that the Gospel is not the instrument in the Lord's hand for converting the world, equally wrong is it to say that the Lord is so to use it at present."*

If ever a statement went directly in the face of the Redeemer's own words, this surely is one.

> "*All power*," said Jesus to his disciples and their successors in every age, "*is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* GO YE THEREFORE, AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS, *baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you;* AND, LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAY, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD."—(Matt. xxviii. 18–20.)

Happily, there is no dispute about the meaning of the phrase, "the end of the world," here. It is agreed on all hands, as I have had occasion to remark before, that the *period* or *state of things* denoted by it terminates with the second coming of Christ. So that the sense would have been quite the same if, instead of saying "*unto the end of the world*," the Lord had said, "*until I come again*." Thus, then, the disciples were commissioned to evangelize the world *before* Christ's second coming; not merely to preach the Gospel, "for a *witness*," to a world that would not receive it till he came again—"to gather out the few elect," as Mr. Bonar expresses it, as contradistinguished from *the world at large*, to be brought in only after the second advent—but to accomplish, instrumentally, the actual "*discipleship of all nations*," to baptize them when gathered in, and to train them up as professed Christians in the knowledge and obedience of the truth, for glory—all before his second coming In the doing of this, He promises to be with them—not merely to stand by them while preaching a rejected Gospel, and to note their fidelity, but clearly to prosper the work of their hands unto the actual evangelization of the world at large, *before* his coming. "Those (says Mr. Bonar) that deny the pre-millennial coming . . . . have *led themselves* and others to expect that at this present time, in this dispensation that precedes the Lord's coming, the preaching of the Gospel is to be followed up with national conversions, or at least conversion and reformation in the dense masses of the world's population." No, brother, we have not "*led ourselves*;" but thy Master and ours—who tremble, as we doubt not thou dost, at the word of the Lord—hath constrained us to believe that not "the few elect," as contradistinguished from the world at large, but that very world at large, is to be gained over to Christ, in the only sense in which the world at large ever will be Christ's "*in this dispensation that precedes the Lord's coming*."

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* Redemption, &c., pp. 186, 187.

But what I wish specially to note, is the connexion between *the present exercise of the work of the ministry*—at home by pastors, and abroad by missionaries—and this evangelization of all nations as the result. *To expect this result*, in the believing and prayerful use of the prescribed means, *is nothing else but to rely on Christ's word of promise;* and to expect it in the "*present*" use of the means, or "in this dispensation that precedes the Lord's coming," is merely to presume that the Lord means what he says. Yet this is what Mr. Bonar ventures to call "a vain" and "*visionary hope*" "dazzling the Church at home," and fitted only to "dishearten" missionaries abroad. Say we not well, that the pre-millennial theory paralyses missionary effort by paralysing missionary expectation?

To the same effect, Mr. H. Bonar. "Do I paralyse effort (he asks) when I say, 'Work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work?'" No, I reply, not when you *say* "work;" but when you teach the workman not to expect the promised result, *then* you paralyse effort.

I cannot illustrate this better, nor more effectually show the bearings of the pre-millennial theory upon missionary work, than by quoting a passage in which Mr. H. Bonar administers a lofty and imposing rebuke to the late excellent *Dr. Bogue* of Gosport, one of the original founders of the London Missionary Society, the wonderful success of which in the South Seas and elsewhere filled his soul with burning desires for the universal triumph of the Gospel, and joyous anticipations of the near approach of that consummation. True, he lived not to see some things which we have witnessed, and which would probably have modified his language; the revived missionary zeal, too, of the Church, then in the warmth of its first love, would naturally be estimated at more than its real value. But for myself, I am willing to underlie the castigation administered to that venerated servant of Christ—now indeed beyond its reach—for what is extracted by Mr. Bonar from his "*Discourses on the Millennium.*"

"Of what use would it be," asks Mr. H. Bonar, "to cheat or dazzle men by such rhetoric as the following [from Dr. Bogue]?—'Was there ever a period in the history of our world in which so many vistas of glorious hope opened to mankind as at the pre-

> sent moment? Let the siege which has so auspiciously commenced upon the forces of the enemy, be kept up with ever-growing skill and determination; let existing advantages be seized upon with a resolution worthy of the cause; let the armies of the living God muster their whole strength, and go forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty, and erelong the camp of the enemy shall be seized with sudden overwhelming dread; the legions of darkness shall flee apace, and the conquest of a world shall be given to the saints of the Most High.' Well spoken! But what if it be all *a dream!* Go forth (fond theorist!) from the study or the pulpit, and look on Europe now. Is there aught . . . . in the turbid swelling of the great deluge of European atheism on which to build such 'glorious hopes?' " &c.*

Where, I desire to ask, is the "cheat" practised by Dr. Bogue? Is it in assuring his readers that "*let* the siege so auspiciously commenced upon the forces of the enemy, *be kept up with ever-growing skill and determination*"—that "*let* existing advantages be seized upon with a resolution worthy of the cause"—that "*let* the armies of the living God *muster their whole strength*, and go forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty;" and *then*, "erelong"—Dr. Bogue does not presume to say how long, but "erelong," or, as the Apostle says about Christ's coming, "yet a little while"—"the camp of the enemy shall tremble and flee, and the world be given to the saints of the Most High?" Is this the "cheat?" For myself, I believe it most profoundly; and if, with such views, Mr. Bonar asks, "Do I paralyse effort?" I answer—*Yes*. Not only does the Lord's commission authorize the expectation that all nations shall be evangelized "at the present time—in this dispensation that precedes the Lord's coming"—but *the very expectation of this result from the preaching of the Gospel will be a prime and indispensable element of success;* and therefore it is to paralyse effort to calumniate such expectations, and let those who talk of "cheating and dazzling men" with "visionary hopes," have a care at Whose door their charges ultimately lie.

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* Coming and Kingdom, &c., pp. 152, 153.

2. On the *judgments* which are to usher in the millennium I have nothing to say, except to notice the false position assigned to them in such statements as the following, already quoted :—"The universal prevalence of true religion (says Mr Brooks), hereafter to be enjoyed, is not to be effected by any increased impetus given to the present means of evangelizing the nations, *but* by a stupendous display of the Divine truth upon all the apostate and ungodly" —as if judgments would do what "the gospel had failed to accomplish"—"evangelize the nations." Let Mr. H. Bonar rebuke this view of the judgments of God. "We look (says he) upon the judgments, at the Lord's coming, in the same light (though differing in degree) as we do upon any judgment of God's hand. . . . He may use these awful calamities just as he now uses afflictions, but the power and the glory are his alone."* Mr. Brooks, indeed, would not deny that the power and glory of conversion, in every case, belong to God ; but by *contrasting* judgments with a preached Gospel, he makes the *instrumentality* that will be employed in converting "the nations," something different from what is now employed in every case of conversion.

3. A word or two on the *effusion of the Spirit*, in virtue of which those extensive conquests of the nations to Christ are to be brought about. We should like to hear more about this. I do not for a moment doubt that those whose writings I am now examining are at one with me in expecting such effusion. But do they believe that it may come "at this present time—in this dispensation that *precedes* the Lord's coming?" *We*, believing that the "discipling of all nations" is to be effected, as the Lord him-

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* Coming and Kingdom, pp. 51, 52.

self assures us, *before* he comes—of course look for those copious showers of the Spirit which alone can make the word efficacious to do it. *They*—believing that the conversion of the nations is not to be till *after* the Lord come—*of course do not look for the Spirit to effect it by any preaching of the Gospel that is, or can be now set on foot.* And is not this to "paralyse effort?"

4. I will not dwell upon the converting efficacy ascribed to *Christ's personal appearing;* because, though such passages as, "They shall *look on me* whom they have pierced"—"Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him," are frequently referred to in proof of this, there seems a general disposition to admit that it is the WORD and the SPIRIT to which even these men will owe their conversion, just as now; and, consequently, that the very sight of Christ in person will only be one of the *means* by which such conversion will be aided, like other striking events, though none will be so striking as this. Strange, indeed, that when Christ "cometh in his own glory, and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels"—when he "cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him"—that the most stupendous, bright, and awful of all events should just rank amongst the *means* by which men at the millennium are to be converted!

Some look to the revival of *miracles* as one great means of the rapid conversions which are to signalise the latter day. But in vain. As we do not *need* them, so the soul in a healthy state does not *desire* them. The Church is in its *manhood*, and miracles are for its *infancy.** Souls that have felt the Saviour's grace know right well its matchless power. After their own conversion, they can never doubt its converting efficacy *on any scale that may be required.* The Spirit in the hand of Christ, and the word in the hand of the Spirit, as they are *the present agency* for converting sinners, and perfecting saints, and advancing the Redeemer's kingdom in the world—so they are all that we are taught to ascribe the glories of the latter day to. And quite enough. That these spiritual glories are not now irradiating the world—that they have not long ago chased away the darkness with which the usurping "god of this world" has been permitted to cover it—is owing to no defect in the *present resources* of the Church, and of the *economy* under which it is placed. That more fidelity on the Church's part would have hastened the predicted consummation, is language which we are fully warranted in using. But He to whom "are known all his works from the beginning of the world," has ordered the "times and the seasons" in such mysterious correspondence with the faithlessness of his Church, as to bring out, in affecting relief, his own sole glory in the long promised subjugation of the world to Christ, and the utter worthlessness of his people as the instruments of it. With a view to this, he suffers the Church to lie for ages in ignoble ease, in pitiful leanness, in a state of carnality which at once blights its fruits, poisons its streams, and rends it in pieces;—while the world, all unpitied, lies powerless in the enemy's hand and its dark places are full of the habitations of cruelty. But when "the time to favour Zion comes, even the set time," it will be seen that it needed but the agencies of this *present dis-*

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* The Scripture doctrine of *physical*, as contrasted with *moral* miracles, deducible from such passages as John iv. 48, 49, compared with chapter xx. 29; John xiv. 12; i. 50, 51, and Luke xvi. 27–31, suggests a line of thought quite adverse to any expectation of physical manifestations, such as floats loosely in the minds of not a few whose apprehensions in every other respect are thoroughly scriptural. The above passages indi-

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cate that such manifestations are suited, as they were granted, to an *inferior and infantile* condition of the Church; while the absence not only of the manifestations themselves, but of *all desire for them*, is characteristic of the Church's *manhood*.

pensation to be brought into full play to accomplish all that is promised: and then will it appear what a mine of wealth and what a magazine of power for the spiritual recovery of a diseased world were in possession of the Church's Head, and were all along the dowery of his people. The heart delights to dwell on this prospect. It desires to see what Christ *can do* by his *Word* and *Spirit.* When by these he does all they are competent to—when they have exhausted their ability, and the work stands still for want of something else—then we may be reconciled to *new methods*, and may look out for a *new dispensation.* But while any such thought is infinitely disparaging to the blessed Spirit, and to the word of his power, there is a satisfaction unspeakable in anticipating the endless ways in which the Spirit may get himself renown, by what he will yet do in and by the Church:—how under His mighty working the instrumentalities for spreading the Gospel may be seen indefinitely multiplying: all the missionary principle and energy of a Church, quickened from the base torpor of ages previous, evolving themselves even to their own astonishment; majestic steps in Providence startling men from their stupid slumbers, awing their spirits, and constraining their attention to long despised truths:—these and other such things, in connexion with direct and copious effusions of the Spirit, the heart delights to think of as destined to effect that universal submission to the sceptre of Christ which is to characterise the latter day. It feels this to be vastly more satisfactory and attractive as a prospect, and far more in accordance with the whole tenor of Scripture, than any rude interposition of visible manifestations—any interruption of the magnificent operation of God's ordinary laws of working, by immediate and short-hand methods of obtaining the result.

CHAPTER II.

NATURE OF THE MILLENNIUM—NOT A STATE OF UNMIXED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

It may appear superfluous to devote a chapter to this point. But if I were asked on what head of our subject the confusion and inconsistency of the pre-millennial scheme are most manifest in the writings of its advocates, and their confidence in it, at the same time, the most unbounded, I should not hesitate to reply, *on this head.*

Their starting-point is usually from the *Parable of the Tares.*—(Matt. xiii.) All modern pre-millennialists hold these parables conclusive in favour of their views. You can hardly open one of their volumes without finding some reference to it in this light.

> '*Let both tares and wheat grow together until the harvest.*' "This," says *Dr. M'Neile*, "is characteristic of the whole period of the Lord's absence. Now, I ask, is this phrase, 'Let both grow together,' equally characteristic of the millennium and of this dispensation? If it be answered, Yes; I cannot for a moment dispute that *such* a millennium will precede the coming of the Lord—we have it already. The millennium predicted by the Holy Ghost is not, however, so motley a concern as this would make it. Its characteristics are, 'The people shall be ALL righteous;* they shall all know the Lord, from the least of them unto the greatest of them; they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; the

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* The capitals are his own.

earth shall be covered with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea; from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in EVERY place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a PURE offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.' These and similar predictions manifestly describe a state of things contrasted with the present. That state is the millennium. *The tares must be removed previous and preparatory to the millennium.* The season of the removal of the tares is the harvest. The harvest is the period of the Lord's coming with the holy angels. Consequently the Lord's coming must be previous and preparatory to the millennium. It may here be remarked how every sectarian effort to get what is called a pure Church, is a petty attempt to antedate the millennium, by the removal of the tares; 'Let both grow together until the harvest.' Then, indeed, 'the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.'"*

In a lecture delivered but a few months since, and already referred to, the same author thus describes the millennial state:—

"THERE SHALL BE NO MORE SIN. *All the then inhabitants of the earth shall be holy.* All shall love God, and serve God, so that his will shall then be done on earth as it is in heaven."†

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* Sermon on the Second Advent, note pp. 41, 42.

This is a literal transcript from his Lectures on the Jews, published eleven years before. During the interval, instead of suspecting any flaw, he seems to have only grown in confidence of its strength. For he tells us, a couple of pages after this note, that, after discussing with an evangelical clergyman the topics in question, he ceased to occupy the defensive position, and asked him his view of those passages of Scripture which are the turning points of the whole debate. The substance of his reply, he says, was this: *The passage is important, very important indeed; but I have not made up my mind as to the meaning of it.* He somewhere else, I think, says that he had never been able to get an answer to this argument from any of his opponents to whom he propounded it. I do not know how he may like the reply which I give to it; but I am not in the predicament of this very intelligent clergyman, having at least "made up my mind" upon it.

† The Priest upon his Throne, (*Lent Lect.* for 1849,) p. 96.

"On this parable of the tares," says an esteemed brother, "we would submit the following remarks: 1. It spans the whole economy under which we are now living. It commences with his personal ministry on earth; it closes with his personal coming to judgment at the end of the world. It is therefore a brief extract, a kind of miniature view, of all that lies between these two extreme limits—between the first and the second coming of our Lord. 2. Between these two extreme limits we find no trace nor hint of any millennium. After and beyond the second coming of the Son of Man, and his gathering out of his kingdom 'all things that offend, and casting them into a furnace of fire,' we do find some notice of that blessed state (the millennium): '*Then* shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.' . . . Now, if a state of things so very peculiar and blessed in its nature as the millennium, and of such long duration, had been to occur between these two points, would it have been entirely omitted in the picture? Suppose its place, in point of fact, to be there, would not its omission in this picture of the whole be somewhat like a history of our race without the fall, and of our recovery without the cross—the very capital feature omitted? 3. The best of the dispensation is *first*, not *last!* It begins well, grows worse, and ends worst of all. . . . 4. The dispensation thus becoming a mixture of good and evil, this mixture continues, not for a while merely, but down to the very end. . . . It was to be a mixed economy down to its very close. . . . The rectifying which comes at last is not by *mercy* but by *judgment*—not by the sowing of grace but the sickle of vengeance—*not by an extension of the gospel, the labours of ministers, or any gracious instrumentality whatsoever now at work*, but by the angels of God, who are to accompany the Son of Man at his second advent. . . . It will consist, not in *re-sowing*, but in *reaping* the *field*.* . . 5. The termination of this economy, therefore, is in *judgment*, not *mercy* . . . mercy, however, not by an extension and enlargement of the *economy of grace*, but in *a new economy altogether*; for in it the evil shall be purged out by consummate judgment on the wicked. The present economy, according to this sketch of its course, does not terminate by an enlarged exercise of grace, in the common meaning of the word, nor BY THE USE AND SUCCESS OF ANY AGENCY NOW IN OPERATION—THE GOSPEL—THE MINISTRY—THE SPIRIT. It is ended by an agency and an act *entirely new and different*—by the immediate intervention of the Son of Man, &c. 6. We may add, that the kingdom, in its PERFECT state—the reign of UNMIXED GOOD, thus introduced by power and judgment—has its seat in the very same world where the evil existed, and whence it is now cast out. . . . In this world is the kingdom, imperfect at first, and mixed with evil, afterwards made *perfect* by the Son of Man and his angels, and ENTIRELY UNMIXED. And it is in this kingdom . . . . that the righteous, when the moral atmosphere has been cleared by the last act of judgment, shine out as the sun without a cloud."[*]

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* How these statements agree with the *gracious* and *converting* effect which they ascribe to the judgments that are to accompany the second advent—as we have seen in the preceding chapter, and under the head of "the Judgment"—I leave my friend to say.

"I may argue," says *Mr. Elliott*, "from Christ's parable of the tares and wheat, as furnishing to my mind a decisive negative to the theory which makes a millennium of universal holiness and blessedness to precede Christ's advent and the saints' resurrection. The tares and the wheat were to grow together intermixed until the harvest (the end of the *αιων* or age[†]). Then at length (not before) *the tares should be eradicated*. . . . This predictive sketch seems to allow no possible place or room for the intervention of any such *spiritual millennium* as Whitby's and Vitringa's [he means a millennium having any *tares* remaining in the spiritual field] before that which is emphatically called the *end of the age*. And the parable is brought to bear more strikingly and decisively on the point now in question, by the statement added, that the righteous are then to shine forth as the sun in God's kingdom."[‡]

Let us now look into this boasted argument.

1. Nothing can be clearer than that the separation of the

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[*] Present Dispensation—its Course. (No. 2 of a Series on Prophecy.) Kennedy, Edinburgh.

[†] See note, p. 34.

[‡] Hor. Apoc., *ut supra*, p. 190.

tares from the wheat is *an absolute and a final separation.* Indeed the extracts given express the same thing. The tract calls the present a "mixed economy from first to last," a "mixture of good and evil." The one which succeeds it is represented as precisely the opposite of this. It is "the kingdom in its PERFECT state;" it is "the reign of UNMIXED GOOD—ENTIRELY UNMIXED," where "*the righteous shine out without a cloud.*" This being the undoubted sense of the parable, and expressed emphatically by those who adduce it, I have to ask,

2. Do you believe your own representation? You do not. It will not do to say that the *glorified* portion of the Church will be perfect; for that is a truism. Your whole argument is, that there cannot be any millennial state amongst *mortal men* before Christ's second coming, because, according to the teaching of this parable, these wax worse and worse onwards till Christ's coming, after which the evil will be purged out, and an unmixed millennium—of men in the flesh, of course—take place. This is your argument, if it be intelligible at all. Evidently, then, you must mean that after Christ's coming there will be no tares—no "imperfection, mixture, evil"—amongst *mortal men*, and in the Church below. The tract speaks of the "purifying of the moral atmosphere," and the establishing of "a new economy," which, of course, refers exclusively to the *mortal* state of mankind. Mr. Elliott says, "Then the tares shall be eradicated." And Dr. M'Neile, who will have no "*motley concern*" of a millennium, describes it in such Scripture language as this: "From the rising of the sun, unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered."—"The earth shall be covered with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea," and so forth. No one can imagine this to be quoted as a description of the state of *glory*. It

is the *millennial* state of men in the flesh, as contrasted with the *present* state, which it is meant to describe.

You picture, then, a state of things upon earth in which you do not yourselves believe. Even Dr. M'Neile, despite the language we have found him using, had no faith, when he wrote his Lectures on the Jews at least, in the *sinlessness* or *perfection* of the millennial state. The tract above quoted, when it expatiates on the sinless perfection of the millennial state, only expresses formally, and out and out, what in substance occurs in almost every production of modern pre-millennialists. But such *absolute and unmixed good—such perfect removal of evil*—hardly one of them is bold enough to say he expects to be the condition of mortal men during the millennium.

The *imperfection* of the millennium is not, indeed, much dwelt on It suits better their views of a Saviour personally present, and a new heaven and new earth already realised, to talk of the *blessed* millennium, without going nicely into the question what that blessedness is to be. It is far more congenial to the feelings of good men, so to mix up the state of glory with the mortal state as to lose themselves in the *general halo* which thus is made to surround the subject in their eyes. "*Sin and misery* till He comes (exclaims Dr. M'Neile); *righteousness and happiness* at His coming! Groanings and agony till He comes; songs of triumph at His coming! Faint glimmerings of hope amidst surrounding and prevailing darkness, and desolation, and despair, till He comes; everlasting light, and life, and joy, and love, at His coming! These are the cadences which continually fall upon the ear from the sacred harp."* Now, it is a pity to spoil so pleasing a picture, but the fault lies with those who paint it. The colours are false; it is a dream; no such millennium is believed in. *It is an earthly state, stript of its earthliness.* When pre-millennialists, however, are roused to draw a definite and clear line between the *glorified* and the *mortal* states of the Church, they describe the millennium *just as other people do*, and in so doing destroy their own argument. Take the following from the Presbyterian Review of Mr. Scott's "Outlines." Mr. Scott had gone rather too far in the direction of a *perfect millennium;* not so far, indeed, as to affirm that there would be absolutely no sin during the millennium, but farther than most pre-millennialists. And this provoked a good refutation of his peculiar opinions, from the pen of a brother pre-millennialist. "Sin," says the reviewer, "and as a consequence, death does exist during the millennium; and we should like some distinct scriptural evidence to the contrary. *The system would require to prove that there is to be absolutely no sin upon the earth during that period.* Sin and death entered the world together, and in like manner will they depart together at the end of the millennium."* If this be a correct account of the millennium, it only proves that *there will not be so many tares then as now:* that is all. Mr. Bickersteth also represents the millennial state as one of simply *prevailing* holiness— a prevalency which, while it does not exclude the presence of the ungodly and wicked upon earth, will make them conceal their real character, and "feign submission." Are such characters *tares*, then, or are they *wheat?* If they be tares, the millennium *cannot* be *the state described by the separation of the tares from the wheat: The tares*—by your own admission—are *still among the wheat, and will not be separated till after the millennium.*

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* Serm. on the Second Advent. Serm. VI., Renovation of the whole earth at the second advent, pp. 191, 192.

Thus, this argument proves most satisfactorily the reverse of what it is brought to establish. But here it may naturally be asked, how such a strange confusion of thought is to be accounted for. How, it may be said, can so many sensible and excellent men confound the state of *mortality* with that of *glory*, and not only apply to the one what even themselves admit to be applicable only to the other, but on this vicious transference build one of their strongest arguments —if their own estimate of its value is to be taken? The question is an interesting one; and the answer to it is, that the *system* almost inevitably engenders such confusion. The fundamental principle of the system—the contemporaneousness and co-existence of the state of *grace* and the state of glory—of *mortality* and *immortality*—of an *upper* and a *lower*—a *celestial* and a *terrestrial* department of one and the same kingdom—this principle destroys the real nature of both the things which it places in juxtaposition. The state of grace, on this principle, ceases to be the state of grace which it is represented to be in God's word; and the state of glory is in like manner perverted. It is not that each is *raised* and *lowered* to the measure of the other. But it is that we have, instead of them, something more or less different from both.

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* Presbyterian Review, Jan. 1845, p. 470.

Before leaving this parable of the tares, I cannot refrain from noticing the light thrown upon it by the other parables in the same chapter.—(Matt. xiii.) Various features of his kingdom are there taught by the Saviour in seven parables. The parable of the *Sower* (v. 3–23) teaches who are the genuine subjects of the kingdom: The parables of the *Treasure* and of the *Pearl* (v. 44–46) teach the priceless value of the blessings of the kingdom: The parables of the *Mustard seed* and of the *Leaven* (v. 31–33) teach its progressive advancement in the world; while the parables of the *Tares* and of the *Net* (v. 24–30, 36–43, 47–50) teach the present mixture, and the future *absolute separation*, of righteous and wicked in the kingdom. Now, as the *growing* character of the kingdom, taught by the "mustard seed," and the *penetrating* and *assimilating* character, taught by the "leaven," go on till "the whole (earth) is leavened," and all the world have been brought to lodge in the branches of the mighty tree of life—these parables must of course take in the millennium, if there is to be one at all; for *there is no millennium to come after the evangelization of the whole world.* "Go," said Christ before he ascended, "and make disciples of all nations; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (*συντελεια τ. αιωνος*)—when his second coming takes place. Accordingly, the same expression is used in these parables. The growing process, the leavening process, and the presence of tares with the wheat—bad fish with the good—all are contemporaneous, and all conterminous; they begin, and they end at "the end of the world," or when Christ comes again. The millennium, therefore, if there be one, *precedes*, and does not, cannot *follow* the second coming of Christ.

Do you ask, then, why the millennium is not mentioned in the parable of the tares? I answer, The object for which it was spoken not only did not *demand* it, but positively *forbade* it. It was to set forth the *mixed* character of the visible Church till Christ come: All are agreed in this. But the millennium is as *truly*, though not in the same *degree*, a mixed state of the visible Church as this is. Pre-millennialists themselves are compelled to admit this. There will be *tares* during the millennium in the field of the Church; and the final apostasy, and the vast confederacy of daring enemies of Christ and his Church—shows that these will not be few. In contrasting, therefore, the *mixed* with the *unmixed* state of the Church, which our Lord does in this parable of the tares, the millennium has no separate place—no standing of its own at all. With reference to the *unmixed* state—when "*the righteous shine* *forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father*"—the millennium differs in nothing worthy of mention in the parable from the present state of the Church: it disappears in that *mixed state of grace* which goes down to the end of the world, and ends in the state of *glory* only by a final *absolute* separation of tares from wheat—righteous from wicked.

Thus, if there is one passage which more effectually than another negatives the pre-millennial scheme, it is the one which of all others, perhaps, is the most frequently and confidently adduced in proof of it.

CHAPTER III

NATURE OF THE MILLENNIUM—JUST THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GRACE IN ITS EARTHLY STATE.

THERE are two famous prophecies of Daniel, which are admitted on all hands to furnish a key to much of the language of Scripture on the subject of Christ's kingdom—being the blossom, so to speak, of preceding, and the bud of succeeding revelations on this head. These two pregnant visions I propose here to examine, in so far as they bear upon our question.

I. In Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the Image (chap. ii.)—representing the kingdoms with which the Church of God has had successively to do, and by which it has suffered so much—the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman—Daniel says—

> "Thou sawest till that *a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image* upon his feet of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and *the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*" "AND," says Daniel, interpreting this part of the vision, "IN THE DAYS OF THESE KINGS (or kingdoms) SHALL THE GOD OF HEAVEN SET UP A KINGDOM, WHICH SHALL NEVER BE DESTROYED: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but IT SHALL BREAK

IN PIECES AND CONSUME ALL THESE KINGDOMS, AND IT SHALL STAND FOR EVER."—(Verses 34, 35, 44.)

On these verses, the following remarks of JOSEPH MEDE, which display his usual penetration, will be read with interest:—

"This prediction," says he, "points out *two states* of the kingdom of Christ. The *first* to be while those times of the kingdoms of the Gentiles yet lasted, typified by a stone hewn out of a mountain without hands, the monarchical statue yet standing upon his feet; the *second*, not to be until the utter destruction and dissipation of the image, when the stone, having smote it upon the feet, should 'grow into a great mountain which should fill the whole earth.' The first may be called, for distinction's sake, *Regnum Lapidis*, the KINGDOM OF THE STONE, which is the state of Christ's kingdom which hitherto hath been; the other, *Regnum Montis*, the KINGDOM OF THE MOUNTAIN, that is, of the stone grown into a mountain, &c., which is the state of his kingdom which hereafter shall be. The *interval* between these two—from the time the stone was first hewn out, that is, the kingdom of Christ was first advanced, until the time it becomes a mountain, that is, when 'the mystery of God shall be finished' (Rev. x. 7)—is the subject of the *Apocalyptical visions*. Note here, first, That the stone is expounded by Daniel to be that lasting kingdom which the God of heaven should set up. Secondly, That the stone was hewn out of the mountain *before it smote the image* upon the feet, and, consequently, *before the image was dissipated;* and, therefore, that the kingdom typified by the stone, *while it remained a stone*, *must needs be within the times of these monarchies*, that is, *before the last of them* (viz. the Roman) *should expire*. Wherefore Daniel interprets, That 'in the days of these kingdoms (not *after them*, but *while some of them were yet in being*), the God of heaven should set up a kingdom,'" &c.*

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* Works, pp 743, 744.

The *Grotian* interpretation of Daniel's *fourth kingdom* has been revived by some learned men of late, as "beyond all reasonable doubt" denoting "the divided *Grecian* dominion which succeeded the reign of

Now observe what comes out of this.

1. The kingdom of Christ, instead of commencing with the millennium, will, it seems, have run one entire stage of its career before that era arrives. There are not two kingdoms—one, "the means," the other, "the end;" one "the preparation for it," the other, "the establishment and manifestation of it;" one, "the supreme kingdom of God," administered by Christ now "in another's right, and with another's power," the other "his own kingdom, throne, and sceptre," to be assumed at the millennium. There is but *one kingdom* of Christ in "two states," commencing during the existence of the last of the four monarchies; that is, on the Redeemer's exaltation to the right hand of power, stretching across the era of the latter day, and losing itself in the final state. However different its *aspects* as "the stone," and as "the mountain," *it is the stone that becomes the mountain.*

2. The difference between the two states of the kingdom represented in the vision—its state *before* and its state *during* the millennium—is not, it seems, a difference of *dispensation* or *organic form*, but merely of *prosperity* and *extent.* "The image is broken in pieces, and the stone becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth."*

Alexander the Great;" and, consistently with this interpretation, "the little horn" of chap. vii. is made to denote, not the ecclesiastical head of the Roman apostasy, but *Antiochus Epiphanes.* (See, among others, Moses Stuart's Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy, p. 86, 2d Edit. Andover, 1842.) But, as I agree with my opponents here, it will not be necessary to argue that question.

* "So say we," replies the Duke of Manchester: "But a change from a stone to a mountain, is more than a change of aspect. Had the prophecy described the stone as growing till it filled the earth, if it had still been a detached stone, that would have answered Mr. Brown's idea of a difference, 'merely of prosperity and extent;' but it becomes a mountain."—(Pp. 300, 301.) I never thought it could admit of a doubt, that the figure of the stone becoming a mountain and filling the whole earth,

Now this is just the view of the kingdom which the Saviour gives in the parables of the mustard seed and of the leaven, to which I adverted in the preceding chapter :—

> "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. Another parable spake he to them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."—(Matt. xiii 31–33.)

The only difference between these representations and that of Daniel is, that in tracing the fortunes of the kingdom in the world, the one takes no notice of what the other emphatically marks—the fall of the anti-christian powers, and the prodigious consequences of that event upon the subsequent condition of the kingdom. Had we no other representations of this matter from those of the parables just quoted, we might be apt to conclude that the onward progress of the kingdom, if slow, would nevertheless be, from first to last, steady, equable, tranquil, and silent. Experience would indeed correct this view of the Saviour's words; teaching us that *progress on the whole*, though chequered and variable, with *ultimate universality*,

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denoted the change, in point of *extent*, of the kingdom of Christ from its earlier to its later stages of development. It is enough to refer generally to the commentators in support of this view of the figure. It matters nothing whether this change will be *sudden* or *slow*, after the stone shall have "smitten the image." All that I wished to mark is, that the change indicated by the figure is *of this* nature.

His Grace, I may here observe, has misunderstood what I said in the preceding paragraph, about the kingdom, at the end of the millennium, "losing itself in the final state." I mean, of course, that it will *merge* into it—its earthly nature disappearing in the enduring glory in which, "after the end," it shall shine for ever and ever.

was all which he must have intended to convey, as it is certainly all that his language necessarily expresses. From Daniel, however, we learn something more definite: namely, that its advances from the beginning up to the millennial era, though real, will be relatively insignificant, in consequence of certain gigantic obstructions, whose malignant influence will keep it enslaved and corrupted, shrivelled and secularized, till they be taken out of the way; but that, having at length effected their complete overthrow, it shall then put forth all its vital and expansive power, and become commensurate with the world. This is manifestly the whole difference between the "two states" of the kingdom—*before* and *during* the millennium—according to Nebuchadnezzar's vision; its *meanness* now, and its *magnitude* then; its comparative *insignificance*, as a principle of power in the world, up to the millennium, and its glorious *universality* and *all-commanding influence* in the latter day.

3. It is the kingdom of Christ, it seems, *with its present resources and agencies*, that is to "break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms," whilst itself "stands for ever." In other words, *Christ's presently existing kingdom has within itself the whole resources by which it is destined to crush the anti-christianism that obstructs its universal triumphs, and to win its way to the throne of the world.* For observe, it was "THE STONE cut out of the mountain without hands"—or, as Daniel interprets it, "the kingdom," which, in the days of these anti christian "kings" or kingdoms, "the God of heaven was to set up"—that was seen "smiting the image and breaking it in pieces;" "and the stone that smote the image"—or "the kingdom which shall break in pieces all these" anti-christian "kingdoms"—this stone "became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

Here let the reader carefully mark what kind of conflict this is between Christ's kingdom and the kingdoms of this world. It is in their anti-christian character alone that the Church comes into collision with them. As *kingdoms* simply —as a mere succession of civil monarchies—the vision has nothing to do with them, and the kingdom of Christ has no quarrel with them; for civil government, as such, whatever be the form of it, is a divine ordinance. The mission of the Church is not to supplant, but to impregnate and pervade it with a religious character, and to render it subservient to the glory of God. Christ's kingdom is not of this world. It has no form of civil polity to fight for. But in so far as the kingdoms of this world are hostile to the Church of the living God, it is and must be opposed to them. And it is in this, and this only light—as conspirators against the interest and the people of God in this world—that the anti-christian kingdoms are seen, and that they are doomed in Nebuchadnezzar's vision. It is in this sphere of malignant influence and action, and this only, that the kingdom of Christ is destined to take their place. In short, the battle is between Christ's *interest* and that of the god of this world, in so far as the one is embodied in the Church or kingdom of Christ, and the other in the kingdoms mentioned in the vision. And if so, then the *fall* of them must be viewed in the same light. As the stone which smites the image is not physical or political, so neither is the blow inflicted by it. Nor does it light upon those anti-christian kingdoms, save in their anti-christian principles and character. And, consequently, their fall can only be considered as the fall of them *in that hostile character*, to be re-constructed upon Christian principles and for Christian objects.

If these views of the triumphs of Christ's kingdom over the kingdoms mentioned in this vision be correct, it is just the triumph of Christianity—not of Christian truth merely, and still less of a mere party, but of embodied, organic, and vital Christianity—over an organized system of deadly opposition to it by the kingdoms of this world. The Church, says this vision, is destined to crush that gigantic, antichristian confederacy, and thereafter to carry all before it. It is just a conflict of interests—a life and death struggle between Christ and Belial on the theatre of this world, in which Christ is to carry the day, and his "kingdom to fill the whole earth."*

Now this is but the issue in which our parables land us. They gave us the thing attained; while here we have the arduousness with which it is reached—that is all. The kingdom shall GROW, says the parable of the mustard seed, till it overspread the earth: It shall WORK into human society, says the parable of the leaven, till it penetrate with its blessed principles and character the whole mass. It shall *fight*, and *win its way*, says Nebuchadnezzar's vision, to the throne of the world, and having smitten down the most formidable of all the bulwarks which Satan ever threw up against its progress, shall thenceforward sit mistress of this world's affairs, pursuits, and enjoyments, bringing them all into captivity to the obedience of Christ!

What then have we found in this vision? We have found that the kingdom of Christ is already in being, having been set up by the God of heaven "*in the days*," or during the currency, of the four famous kingdoms—not at, but long before, the millennium. We have found that the difference between its two principal "states," its pre-millennial and its millennial state—is a difference not of administration, of constitution, of dispensation or form, but of prosperity and extent. Its oppressors cease, its chains fall off, its vitality, elasticity, and force become signally manifest, its character is developed, its limits are extended, and it becomes at length all in all: And, to complete the representation, we have found that all this is just the triumph of *the now existing Church*—the stone cut out of the mountain without hands merely smiting the image. No new weapon does the Church get to fight her enemies withal. No change of dispensation does she undergo. She is already all that she needs to be. She is complete in her living and ever-present Head, having "all power in heaven and in earth" at her command, and getting it too at the destined period, when, "the time to favour her is come, even the set time."

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* "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." (John xviii. 36.) "We do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." (2 Cor. x. 3, 4.) "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion—behold thy king cometh unto thee; just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will *cut off the chariot* from Ephraim, and *the horse* from Jerusalem, and *the battle bow* shall be cut off; AND HE SHALL SPEAK PEACE TO THE HEATHEN: *and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.*" (Zech. ix. 9, 10.)

II. We have in Daniel (ch. vii.) another vision of the very same thing, with just enough of circumstantial variety to throw additional light upon the whole subject. Under the symbol of four rampant *Wild Beasts*, are set forth the oppressions of the Church of God by the four great monarchies described in the former vision—the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman; the last perpetuated in its ecclesiastical head at Rome, denoted by the little horn "of the fourth beast rising after" the empire has been broken up into ten distinct and independent kingdoms, and altogether "diverse from them." (Verses 8, 24.) Under this ecclesiastical form of the Roman kingdom, the Church is represented as suffering more than from all the other kingdoms, or from itself under its Pagan form. This Roman head of apostate Christendom "speaks great words against the Most High, and wears out the saints of the Most High, and they are given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time" (v. 25), the famous prophetic period of twelve hundred and sixty years,* at the end of which this wild beast of a tyrant, this anti-christian oppressor of the Church of God, is judged, condemned, and executed: whereupon the saints are delivered, and henceforth have every thing their own way throughout the whole earth, the world being given into their hands.

Such in substance is the celebrated vision, to whose identity in subject and scope, and yet remarkable diversity of representation from it, we now request the reader's attention.

1. To Nebuchadnezzar, being a king, the four powers are represented as kingdoms: To Daniel, whose interests and affections as a man of God, were all bound up with the progress and prosperity of the Church of God, they are represented as nothing else than so many wild beasts, tearing and treading on the people and cause of God upon earth. To the monarch of Babylon the Church is represented in the only light in which it would be intelligible to him, or at least formidable—as a *kingdom* which the God of heaven was to set up in the days of the four monarchies, of which his own was the first; a kingdom which, after existing for a long time without making much impression upon the world, would at length get the better of the other kingdoms, and become all in all. To the prophet, mourning over the desolations of Zion, this heavenly

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* Called in the last chapter of this book, "a time, times, and an half" (ch. xii. 7); and in the Apocalypse, "forty and two months" (ch. xi. 2, and xiii. 5); "one thousand, two hundred and threescore days" (ch. xi. 3, and xii. 6); and "a time, times, and half a time," (ch. xii. 14).

kingdom appears, in the first instance, simply as "the saints of the Most High," worn out, and given into the hand of the little horn of the fourth beast—the ecclesiastical oppressor by whom the sovereignty of the fourth or Roman kingdom, in its divided form, is so terribly wielded. And just as in the Apocalypse, "the woman"—the true Church—is fain to betake herself to "the wilderness" for safety, while only certain "witnesses clothed in sackcloth" hold up any faithful testimony in that cloudy and dark day of rampant anti-christian domination; so here, we find only "the saints of the Most High" on the Lord's side, as if they could scarcely be called a "kingdom"—just a noble band of faithful witnesses, worn out and given into the hand of their oppressor for an appointed period, yet still keeping their ground, biding their time, and at length gloriously vindicated and all-victorious. Different, however, as these representations are, the difference will be seen to arise solely from *the point of view*. The thing represented is in both visions the same—the Church of Christ. The first vision gives the *date* of its erection in the days of the Roman Cæsars. The second gives us its proper *character*—a kingdom of "saints." In the first vision, Christ's "kingdom, instead of being left to other people, breaks in pieces and consumes all the other kingdoms, and stands for ever." In the second, the long oppressed "saints of the Most High take and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." This "taking and possessing the kingdom" (vii. 18), evidently means the same thing with "the stone's smiting the image, and itself becoming a great mountain, and filling the whole earth," in the first vision. The former, being the more definite, explains the latter, which is the more general statement; showing it to mean just the triumph of Christ's cause, as embodied in the living Church, over the anti-christianism of the kingdoms of men, and its consequent universal and blessed sway in the world.

Turning to that part of the Apocalypse which (as Mede says in the extract we have given from him) relates to the same period and the same event—namely, the sounding of the seventh trumpet—we have a sublime confirmation of the view I have given of these two visions. Nothing can be grander than the song in which the issue is there hymned by celestial voices (Rev xi. 15): "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying,

> "THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE WORLD HATH BECOME OUR LORD'S AND HIS CHRIST'S; AND HE SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER!"*

2. A very important feature in the case, wanting in the first vision, is supplied by the second. In the former, it is simply a trial of *might:* the blow struck by the stone breaks the image in pieces. In the latter, it is first and chiefly a trial of *right:* the beast is judged and condemned; his dominion, found usurped and illegal, is *taken away*, and the kingdom and dominion are *given* to the people "of the saints of the Most High," as to the rightful possessors. Let us look at this a little. A judicial assize is represented as being held upon the anti-christian oppressor of the saints of the Most High, or kingdom of Christ. And as the judgment to be held upon this wicked system is not a human but a divine judgment—or the view of it which GOD takes—the symbols and circumstances of it are all borrowed from the characteristics of the *last judgment.* "I beheld (says the prophet) till the thrones were cast," or rather "placed down"—for the Judge, with the assessors, to sit on.† This throne is seen occupied by the Eternal,

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* See first note, p. 237.

† See the LXX., the Vulgate, Theodotion, &c., and with manifest propriety, since it is mmediately added, "And the Ancient of days did *sit.*"

arrayed in the symbols of awful purity and justice, and flaming with vengeance against his adversaries: "And the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him." Then we have his attendant angelic ministers: "Thousand thousands ministered unto him, ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." Arrangements are now made for proceeding with the trial: "The judgment was set, and the books were opened;"—the book of the *facts* and the book of the *principles* of the case,—the record, on the one hand, of the high misdemeanours of this anti-christian system against the kingdom and cause of God, and, on the other hand, the grounds in law for its condemnation, as these are set forth in the written word. And now the prophet hears the sentence, and witnesses its execution: "I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." (verse 9–11.) In the Apocalypse, this is expressed by the beast's (this same usurping wild beast's) being cast, with his confederates alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone (chap. xix. 20.) As the imagery of the trial is that of the last judgment, it was fit that his end should be represented as a consignment of him to hell-fire. Bred of hell, the engine of hell—to hell it is fit it should be seen to go. *Systems*, indeed—kingdoms—public parties—cannot go to hell, strictly speaking. Yet as the trial of them is *real*, so the destruction of them is as truly *judicial* as ever the perdition of ungodly men will be at the great day. Only let it be carefully borne in mind, that the scene has nothing to do with *individuals*, as such. It is the trial and condemnation of a *system*—a *cause*—a *kingdom*—a great *public party*, and of that alone. Nor is any thing more meant by these august formalities of a *judgment* upon the little horn, than merely to intimate to us how *righteous* will be the destruction of that wicked interest. Nebuchadnezzar's vision exhibits the fall of anti-christianism, as resulting from a *blow* given to it by the kingdom of Christ. Daniel sees that too, in the saints of the Most High *taking* the kingdom and possessing it. But, in addition to this, he gets a view of the real secret of this triumph of the Church. It lies not so much in the *might* which she can command—though that is boundless—as in the *right* which is on her side. Her rival claimant for supremacy is a base usurper, and godless blasphemer, and tyrant oppressor of the saints of the Most High. He is on this account doomed as the enemy of Heaven, to be cast out as an abominable branch. When his day of visitation comes, those who are on the Lord's side will find him an easy prey, and may say one to another, as Caleb said to the Israelites concerning the people of the land, " They are bread for us : *their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us : fear them not.*" (Numb. xiv. 9.)

It is surprising that a scene whose purport is so plain should have been so much mystified as this is by pre-millennialists. They confound it with the last judgment ; making this, at the *beginning* of the millennium, to be the *first act*, as they make the judgment of those who shall rise at the *end* of the millennium to be the *last act* of a great judgment-day which is to last a thousand years. This theory we owe, I believe, to Joseph Mede,* whose *theological* capacity appears from his writings to have been as slender as his skill in some other departments was unrivalled. I have already at some length investigated this theory; but, independently of all that we said upon that subject, nothing can be more evident than that the judgment which Daniel saw in his vision, is not the judgment of *persons* at all (save as they may be connected with the system, and involved in its ruins), but purely the judgment of the system, party, or *interest* of the little horn, and is, in fact, but a sublime symbolical way of expressing the *righteousness* of antichrist's destruction.

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* See his " Answer to Dr. Meddus, touching the Day of Judgment. Works, Book iv. Epist. xv. p. 762.

These remarks will, if I mistake not, throw light upon the remainder of the vision, which is evidently to be interpreted upon the same principles. One claimant for the throne of the world has been disposed of. He had been in possession of the ground, indeed, long before his Rival, in some sense; and might pretend to a *de facto* right to keep the ground. But right *de jure* he had none, and that is the only right recognized in heaven. He is accordingly, at the time appointed, swept away; and the stage being now clear, the rival Claimant—even the Son of Man, borne upon the clouds—is seen advancing to the Eternal Arbiter, still sitting in his awful throne, and is introduced to him by the angelic officers of state: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him." (Verse 13.) For what purpose is this? That he may be seen putting in his claim to the sovereignty of the world, and getting that claim recognized by Him that sitteth upon the throne. "ASK OF ME," says the Ancient of days, in effect, "and I WILL GIVE THEE the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psal. ii. 8.) The prophet sees this done. "And," he adds, "there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Verse 14.)

Who does not see that this has nothing to do with the second personal advent of Christ? The coming of the Son of Man here is not, be it observed, a coming to *men* at all, but a coming to *God;* nor is it any local coming even to Him. It is simply the *advancement* and the *recognition* of his claim to rule the world, clothed in state forms,—in the symbolic drapery of an august installation or inauguration. *From what locality his rule is to issue*, the vision says not a word, nor gives a hint. It is just *the rule itself*—"that all people, nations, and languages, should serve and obey"—wrested out of the hand of a base usurper, and committed to "Him whose right it is to reign." It is just that in symbolic language which Zechariah expresses in naked terms, referring to the same period; "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." (Chap. xiv. 9.) It is the removal of all the Redeemer's *public rivals*, in consequence of which "*the Lord alone* is exalted in that day." (Isaiah ii. 11, 17.) Enemies, we shall by and by find, will still exist; but they will not be *exalted*, or lift up the head. They will be still, and know that he is God. They will yield him feigned submission; but universal submission he shall have. The only difference, then, between his rule now and in the latter day, is in the presence now, and the extinction then, of a *public party* in opposition to him, together with the native consequences of these very different states of things. *Now*, it is said to him, "Rule thou *in the midst of thine enemies.*" (Ps. cx. 2.) *Then*, it is said to him, "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. They are dead; they shall not live; they are deceased; they shall not rise: to this end hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish." (Isa. xxvi. 13, 14.)

Would you know in what sense "the kingdom is given to the people of the saints of the Most High?" You have but to consider in what sense they were deprived of it before. The vision has to do with them solely in the light of their *principles*,—their "saintship" and devotedness to "the Most High." It is this which was *kept down* before. Living religion was not in favour, and did not rule the kingdoms of men. It had enough to do to keep its own ground, and often scarcely did that. It was voted out and expelled from the place which it claimed as its own, the place of supremacy in all the affairs of men. When Christians came down from these claims, or modified them,—when they compromised the rights of Him to whom they had sworn allegiance, and who had intrusted his interest and honour to their keeping, they were tolerated and at times caressed, like an adulterous wife, by the kings of the earth, or the ruling powers, and the whole dominant interest. Then they were *not* "the saints of the Most High." Their saintship and fealty to Heaven being in abeyance, they were not themselves, nor as themselves were entertained, by "the world who loves (only) its own." Whenever they stood forth in their real character, they were *kept out* and *kept down*. Such, at least, was the rule; and any brief intervals of a better state of things were the rare exceptions, with which the vision has nothing to do. Now, the tables are turned. Saintship and fealty to heaven's King are all in all, while irreligious opposition is more thoroughly put down than before it was rampant. Now, "the heavens do rule" in the kingdoms of men; and saintly and leal-hearted men, Christians indeed, and living for Christ, bring all into captivity to the obedience of their Lord. Living Christianity exercises the sovereignty of the world. Going forth in its life-giving, all-penetrating, all-transforming virtue, it moulds the institutions and affairs of men to its own blessed character, making "God's will to be done on earth even as it is done in heaven."

Having thus, at considerable length, examined and compared these celebrated visions of the kingdom of Christ, I would appeal to the impartial judgment of the reader, whether they do not confirm and illustrate all that I have said of the *time* and the *nature* of Christ's kingdom—that it was set up on his ascension to the right hand of power, or, as Daniel expresses it, "in the days" of the fourth or Roman kingdom;* that the difference between the "two states" of the kingdom—before the millennium and during that period—is a difference merely of *prosperity and extent* —the difference between the presence and the removal of certain gigantic obstructions to its progress and supremacy in the world, and the removal of which, at the appointed time, will be attended with no change of constitution, form, or *dispensation*, but will merely set free its latent energies, and make way for the development of its internal resources to the benediction of a miserable world? As the *birth* of a man, all puny though he then be, is the manifestation of his life "in its primary sense," and the manhood to which he ultimately attains is but the same life developed and matured; so the millennial state of the kingdom of Christ will be but the full expansion and bright development) the unrestrained and most benign rule of a kingdom, the Sovereign of which is already on his throne—the statutes of which are already proclaimed—the foundations of which are already laid—and the conquests of which are proceeding apace. The little leaven may leaven the whole lump of humanity; the grain of mustard seed may grow to be a tree sufficient to overshadow the whole earth; but the mass is the same, and the tree is the same, at every stage. The whole is there from the first. Not a new element is added. Expansion and development, growth and maturity, are all the difference.

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* "He that shall here expound 'in the days,' to mean 'after the days,' shall give me leave not to believe him, unless also he can persuade me that the Stone which smote the image was hewed out of the mountain after the image was dashed in pieces and vanished."—MEDE, p. 745.

In diebus regum illorum—*non posteaquam deleti erunt*. (BENG. in Apoc xi. 15)

3. I had nearly omitted to notice an important particular in Daniel's vision, intimating the *gradual* nature of the destruction which is to come upon the Papal antichrist. "And the judgment (says the prophet) shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, *to consume and to destroy it* UNTO THE END." (Ch. vii. 26.) When one reads of the Stone "*smiting* the image, and *breaking* it to pieces," and of the beast "being *slain* and his body *destroyed and given to the burning flame*;" and when this is compared with the words of Paul, that "the Lord shall consume" this power "by the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him *with the brightness of his coming*" (2 Thess. ii. 8)—he is apt to think of some *single act of vengeance*—some one act of destructive violence that will cause the instantaneous extinction of the hated power. This may seem to be confirmed if we take "*the Stone*" to mean not the *kingdom* of Christ, but Christ *himself*. That, however will not stand. I admit that able divines have adopted it; but the sacred text is a better interpreter of itself than all commentators, and it informs us that "the Stone" denotes the *kingdom* of Christ. "In the days of these kings (or kingdoms) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall (that is the kingdom shall) break in pieces and consume (תַּדִּק וְתָכֵה) all these kingdoms, and *itself* (וְהִיא) shall stand for ever." (Dan. ii. 44.)*

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* Prebendary *Louth* says, "The Jews unanimously agree that by *the*

Now, the kingdom of Christ not being "of this world," and so not "bearing the sword," does not "break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms" in any such *pitched battle* as the armies of men contend for the mastery in, and such as many are wont to represent "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" at "Armageddon." I believe in no such way of deciding the question between Christ and antichrist—between "the kingdom which the God of heaven has set up," and "all these kingdoms" which it is to "consume and destroy." Believing that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal," but (*just for that reason*) "mighty to the pulling down of strongholds," I believe the warfare itself to be not carnal. There may be much carnal warfare *in connexion with it*:—I do not deny that. But the conflict, as I have before remarked, is of another kind. And the apocalyptic description of Christ coming out of heaven on a war-horse, magnificently caparisoned—attended by armies of celestial horsemen—to fight the battle against "the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse and against his army," with the invocation addressed to "all the fowls that fly in the midst of

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Stone is here meant the *Messiah*." But by this he does not mean his *person* as distinguished from his *kingdom*; for Lowth adduces this testimony in support of his own application of the Stone to the *kingdom* of Christ. All he means is, that the Jews agree with the Christians in the *Messianic* application of this prediction.

The fathers were fond of illustrating the miraculous generation of Christ by the Stone's being "cut out of the mountain without hands;" and thus the application of the words to Christ seem to have gained a footing. (The application of Ezek. xliv. 2 to the same circumstance is scarcely so respectable.) The true but simple sense of the Stone's being "cut out of the mountain without hands," is given in the verse above quoted. "In the days of these kings *shall the God of heaven set up* a kingdom," as contrasted with the frail and perishable, because earthly, kingdoms set up by men—"a kingdom which shall not be left to other people," &c.

heaven to come and sup upon the flesh of kings, captains, and mighty men, of horses and their riders, and of all men, free and bond, small and great" (Rev. xix. 11, &c.)—this symbolical description of the conflict that is to issue in the final destruction of antichrist and all his party, does not lead me the more to expect a "carnal warfare," but just the reverse

If this view of the conflict be correct, we shall be the less surprised to learn that the final issue is to be *gradual* rather than *immediate*—the result of *many* blows rather than of *one.* A succession of weakening defeats and wasting visitations, the failure of the very schemes from which the enemies of Christ's kingdom expected the greatest success, and providential manifestations of Heaven's wrath against them—such "untoward events" on the one side; and on the other, a succession of quickenings, enlargements, and triumphs—Christ's cause growing in strength, and his friends "waxing much more confident by the very bonds" which oppress them—such a species of antagonism we may figure to ourselves as consonant to the *nature of the parties:* such a march of the children of light into the territories of darkness would be worthy of Him who delights to "spoil the Egyptians." It may be a protracted, complicated, and sometimes imperceptible process of "consumption and destruction" that is going on,* but one delights to think how the sapping and mining process may be slowly but surely advancing, and "the daughter of Babylon" be "near to destruction," at the very time when "she saith in her heart, I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." (Rev. xviii. 7.) Infinite complications there may be in the plot; at times the enemies shall make themselves sure of victory, and prepare for the celebration of it. But "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh at them; the Lord shall have them in derision." It is his way to take time to all his great works. "One day is with Him as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." It seems, indeed, to be a law of the moral kingdom, that all the great powers—civil and ecclesiastical, of light and of darkness—that have borne sway among men, shall both rise and fall by degrees. So was it with the mighty monarchies that have overshadowed the world. So has it been with the kingdom of the false prophet From the first risings of ambition among Christ's ministers, to the time when all Christendom trembled at the grim tyrant of the seven hills—how slow has been the progress! For three hundred years—from the time when that dark, and withering, and accursed power seemed to get its death-blow at the glorious Reformation, until now—how often has the tide, to human appearance at least, rolled back, and how plausibly has it been asserted that not an inch of solid ground has since that day been gained! Astounding, indeed, are the events of our day. Scarce a year has elapsed since the right arm of the Papacy was paralysed by a revolution, from the effects of which it struggles to recover itself, though as yet with but partial success—I allude, of course, to Austria. The temporal power of the Pope, after being swept away by his own subjects, and suffering a glorious eclipse, has been re-established in a way which has

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* It is worthy of notice that in all the three places which describe the destruction of antichrist, two terms are employed:—

"It shall *break in pieces* and *consume* (הָסֵף, make an end of) all these kingdoms." (Dan. ii. 44.)

"The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to *consume* and to *destroy* (לְהַשְׁמָדָה וּלְהוֹבָדָה) it unto the end. (Dan. vii. 26.)

"Whom the Lord shall *consume* (ανελεῖ) with the Spirit of his mouth, and *destroy* (καταργησει) with the brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. ii. 8.)

The *gradual* nature of the destruction of antichrist—the *successive steps* by which its extermination is to be effected—seems clearly to be thus denoted.

already opened many eyes, and may prove but a step towards the downfall of his whole authority. But we prophesy not. There has been too much of this. The whole horizon of Christendom may yet be overcast, and the safety of the truth and cause of God be brought into such peril, that "men's hearts may fail them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth." But "when these things begin to come to pass," we are taught to look up and lift up our heads, for our "redemption draweth nigh." The ship of the Church shall outride the storm; the gates of hell shall not prevail: the cause of God, careering over the billows, shall reach the fair havens; and "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (Dan. vii. 27.)*

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* Mr. H. Bonar's elaborate reply to the view given in this chapter of Daniel's vision, seems to me a great deal more startling in its charges than solid and convincing in argument. I endeavoured to show how very different a judgment this upon Daniel's "fourth beast" or "little horn" of the papal antichrist will be, from the *last judgment* described at the close of the twentieth chapter of Revelation. I placed the difference between these two judgments not so much in the *time* of them (the one before, the other *after* the millennium), as in the *character* of them; the one being the trial, condemnation, and destruction of the antichristian *system*, *interest*, *cause*, or *kingdom*—the other, *a judicial investigation of the state and character of individual* PERSONS, for eternity. This difference is manifest from the very description of the parties judged, and of the issue. The *Judge* is of course the same in both; the awful *pomp* of the judgment is very much the same also, for it is a high judicial decision in both cases: but how totally different the *parties* and the *issue!* Says Daniel, "The judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the *horn* spake: I beheld till the *beast* was *slain*, and his body given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." Chap. vii. 10-12.) This slaying of the beast, and destruction of his

body, and committal of it to the flames, is afterwards described in the same vision simply by the *taking away of his dominion.* "The saints shall be given into his (the little horn's) hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and (as the result) they shall take away his *dominion*, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And (in place of it) the kingdom and dominion . . . . shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." (Vv. 25–27.) How clearly does this show that the whole is a question of *dominion!* Antichrist's dominion—here styled "the beast," "the little horn"—being usurped and rebellious, tyrannous and unholy, though tolerated for long ages, is at length to be judicially "taken away, consumed, and destroyed unto the end;" while the saints—alone acknowledging the rights and prerogatives of "our Lord and of his Christ"—shall "take and possess the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven," ruling for God over the wide world. A blessed consummation this, but how totally different from "the judgment of the great day!" "And I saw the *dead*, small and great, stand before God . . . and *the dead* were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and hades delivered up the dead that were in them; and *they were judged* EVERY MAN *according to their works*." DURHAM mentions another all-important point of difference between the two judgments. "THE BOOK OF LIFE," he says, "IS NOT MENTIONED IN DAN. VII., to which there is an allusion in all this (description of the last judgment), *because it is but* A TEMPORAL JUDGMENT *that is principally intended in that place.*"*

Such then, is the view of Daniel's vision for which I am classed with the Pantheistic *Emerson* (p. 159), with the Swedenborgian *Bush* (p. 229, &c., &c.), with the Rationalist *Henke* (p. 260), and I know not what all errorists. Leaving it to the reader to judge how far such a mode of writing is for edification, I merely notice the singular *ground* on which such charges are rested, namely, that by representing the judgment in Daniel as a judgment on the antichristian *system*, cause, interest, kingdom—as contra-distinguished from a trial of individual *persons* "according to their works"—I make it a judgment upon a mere *abstraction.* The shallowness of this is too palpable to require an answer. The destruction of the Papacy has hitherto been understood to mean something real, apart from what may happen to its individual adherents. As the great proportion of these will have gone the way of all the earth ere that event occur, *they* at least cannot share in the destruction of the Papacy, but will be rotting in their graves when its fall takes place. And even as to those who adhere to it at the time of its overthrow, surely it is the fall of that system of soul-destroying error, daring blasphemy, blind superstition, hypocritical priestcraft, and grinding tyranny—*the termination of such impositions upon men in the name of religion*, "holy, catholic, and apostolic"—this surely is the destruction predicted, the consummation hymned in the prophetic Scriptures, the deliverance which an oppressed Church longs to witness, and not the *individual calamities* which no one denies will overtake those who are actively mixed up with the accursed thing, which may prove very terrible, and of which Europe has already, in all probability, begun to be the theatre.

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* By "principally" Durham means that though it is but a temporal judgment that is predicted in Dan. vii., it is, like all temporal judgments, an *earnest* and *forerunner* of the last judgment, and so couched in the language of it as all the great temporal judgments described in Scripture undeniably are.

Further, I have said that "One like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven, *coming to the Ancient of days, and brought near before him*," does not mean Christ's second coming *from heaven to earth*, but his symbolical approach *to the Father*, to be invested with "dominion and glory and a kingdom over all people, nations, and languages," as is in the very next verse expressed—(Vv. 13, 14.) If it means any *local* approach at all, it is his *ascent* rather than his *descent*—his solemn entry into heaven to receive the reward of his work. But in my view, neither his ascension to the right hand of God, nor his return in person to the earth, is here intended, but, as I have said, it is a scenic representation of his investiture with the rights of universal dominion. As in the Apocalypse we find him symbolically "clothed with a cloud, a rainbow on his head, his face as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire," and thus arrayed, "setting his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth," to claim and possess what his Father had promised him, even the "heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession," (Rev. x. 1, 2; Ps. ii. 8)—so here we have "the Ancient of days" *installing* him in this dominion over all people, nations, and languages. Well, in thus refusing to recognize here Christ's second coming from heaven to earth, Mr. Bonar writes as if I were imposing some unheard of and violent sense upon the vision. But is it so? "The prophet (says *Maclaurin*) does not represent the Son of man as coming in the clouds of heaven *from heaven to earth, as at the general judgment*, but as coming with the clouds of heaven from his former residence [the earth] towards the throne of God, which, according to the Scripture style, is heaven. And this is confirmed by the words immediately following, that 'they brought him near before him,' viz., before the Ancient of days."* "this (says *Scott* in his Commentary) must point out Christ to us . . . . *ascending to heaven, the throne of God, to receive the kingdom covenanted to him.*"—(Ps. ii. 7-9.)

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* See *Scott's* Commentary, *ad loc.*

CHAPTER IV.

NO MILLENNIAL REVIVAL OF JEWISH PECULIARITIES.

THAT the unbelieving Jews should look for a rebuilt *temple*, a re-established *priesthood*, the restoration of their *bloody sacrifices*, and an Israelitish *supremacy*—at once religious and civil—*over all the nations of the earth*, when their Messiah comes, is not to be wondered at. With these views of Old Testament prophecy, their fathers rejected Jesus and put him to death, as he neither realised their expectations, nor professed to do so; but on the contrary directed his whole teaching to the uprooting of the prevalent conceptions of Messiah's character, work, and kingdom, and to the establishing of views directly opposite. Unless they had been prepared to abandon their whole scheme of Old Testament interpretation, they could not consistently have acknowledged Jesus to be the Messiah. But that any *Christians* should be found agreeing with the unbelieving Jews in their views of Old Testament prophecy—that there should be a school of Christian interpreters, who, while recognizing Jesus as the promised Messiah, and attached in all other respects to evangelical truth, should nevertheless contend vehemently for Jewish literalism, and, as a necessary consequence, for Jewish altars, sacrifices, and supremacy—is passing strange. It is true that this Judaistic element was not wholly expelled from the minds of the apostles before the day of Pentecost; it is true that even after this it had its advocates in some of the infant churches—as the Galatian and Colossian; and it is true that, even when extruded thence by the zeal with which Paul attacked it, and the light which he poured upon the Old Testament by his rich expositions, it still lingered, and struggled for a footing, and succeeded in intrenching itself in a number of shallow minds, whose *poverty* of conception in things divine is supposed by distinguished historians to have given them the name of EBIONITES (from אֶבְיוֹן *poor.*) But characterised as this Ebionitic school was by low views of the Person and Work of Christ, as well as of every thing else in religion, its existence was brief and outside the orthodox Church; nor has it ever been able to raise its head, save in a few isolated cases, till the present day. The most remarkable fact of all is, that those who held the pre-millennial theory in the second and third centuries, seem not to have believed in any literal territorial restoration of the Jews at all,—much less in their millennial supremacy over all nations, and the re-establishment of their religious peculiarities.

How strangely, in the light of these facts, do the following extracts from the pre-millennialists of our day strike the ear:—

> "Zion and Jerusalem," says *Mr. Fry* (Rector of Desford), "are to be the great source of spiritual blessedness to the whole world. This 'city of Jehovah' is represented as *the grand centre and emporium of civil and religious power, whither all nations resort for their laws and government.* 'He shall reign in Jerusalem unto the ends of the earth.' . . . . But what most surprises us is, that a ritual of worship, so like the Mosaic ceremonial, should again be restored by divine appointment, rather than institutions more analogous to those of the gospel Church; and especially, that the *sacrifices of animal victims* should be again enjoined! For we read of all the various offerings of the Levitical

economy, not only 'peace-offering' and 'meat-offering,' but 'burnt-offerings,' 'trespass-offerings,' and 'sin-offerings.' We can only reply, such is the divine pleasure. It is not for us to judge what would be best for Israel and for the world at large in this future age." "However averse to our preconceived notions may be the restitution of ceremonial sacrifices, that restitution exactly corresponds with the prediction in the close of the fifty-first Psalm, where a reference is clear to Israel of the last times: 'Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build the walls of Jerusalem. Then wilt thou desire the right sacrifices, an offering and a holocaust; *then shall they offer steers upon thine altars.*'"*

"In Ezek. xliii. 26," says *Mr. Freemantle*, "it is commanded that the priests shall purge the altar seven days. . . . And upon the eighth day and so forward, the priest shall make the burnt-offerings upon the altar, and the peace-offerings, and God will accept them, Thus *the legal ceremonies* will be celebrated upon the day of the resurrection of Christ. . . . Then the song of thanksgiving in Ps. lxvi. shall resound through the *temple aisle.* . . . 'We will go into thy house with *burnt-offerings;* I will offer unto thee *burnt-sacrifices of fatlings*, with *the incense of rams;* I will offer *bullocks* with *goats:*' And this forms the fourth and last feature [of "Israel's glory after the advent"] viz. *the renewal of sacrificial worship.* . . . But it may be asked, Is it commanded? Assuredly. Turn to a prophecy relating to times subsequent to the restoration of the twelve tribes, and you have the answer (Jer. xxxiii. 17, 18), 'Thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to *offer burnt-offerings*, and to *kindle meat-offerings*, and to *do sacrifice* continually.' And in Ezek. xlv. xlvi., the most minute directions as to the manner in which the sacrifices are to be offered, and which *in some respects* will be found to differ from the details *under the law of Moses.*"†

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* The Second Advent, &c., by the Rev. John Fry, 1822, vol. i. pp. 120, 583, 585, 586.

† Lent Lect. for 1843, *ut supra*, pp. 276, 278, 279.

"At that [millennial] time," says *Mr. Brock*, "the [civil or political] *ascendency* of Israel will be *paramount* over the Gentiles. Clear to this effect are the predictions of the prophets. 'The kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem. . . . Thou shalt beat in pieces many people. . . . The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish. . . . Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles,' &c. The same *ascendency* shall also be exercised by Israel over the Gentiles in *spiritual things*. Jerusalem will be the metropolitan city of the converted nations. 'The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains; and all nations shall flow unto it,' &c." *

"Jerusalem," says *Mr. Pym*, "shall be the METROPOLIS OF THE WORLD, *from which the law shall go forth*, *and be the* CENTRE OF WORSHIP FOR THE WHOLE EARTH. . . . That this shall then distinguish Jerusalem above every other city, is apparent from the words of the prophet (Isa. ii. 2, 3), 'The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains,' &c. 'From one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me' (Isa. lxvi. 23). 'Every one that is left of all the nations . . . shall go up from year to year to worship, . . . and to keep the feast of tabernacles.' His people shall be *exalted above all others*. 'And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen and your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord, ... ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles,' &c. When I read such passages as these, do I marvel that the heart of an Israelite according to the flesh should beat high in prospect of the future glories of his nation? Why, the blood runs faster through my own veins when I consider the predictions of their national greatness upon earth in the ages to come; much more, then, must it kindle the affections of that people who are the subject of these promises. It would appear from this passage, that the ordinary avocations of life, such as the dressing of vines and the tending of flocks, will be performed for them by the Gentiles, whilst they are to be engaged in the higher offices of being the priests of the Lord.' "*

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* Lent Lect. for 1846 ("Israel's Sins and Israel's Hopes"), pp. 271–273.

I regret that the *Messrs. Bonar* must be added to the list of those who have adopted these views. After endeavouring to show that the *literal* sense of these prophecies, and particularly of the last eight chapters of Ezekiel, is the only practicable one—

> *Mr. H. Bonar* exclaims, "Why should not the *temple*, the *worship*, the *rites*, the *sacrifices*, be allowed to point to the Lamb that was slain in the millennial age, if such be the purpose of the Father? . . . How *needful* will [such] retrospection be then, especially to Israel? How needful, when dwelling in the blaze of a triumphant Messiah's glory, to have ever before them some memorial of the cross, *some palpable record of the humbled Jesus*, some visible exposition of *his sin-bearing work* [*i. e.*, by the sacrificing of beasts, as of old!] in virtue of which they have been forgiven, and saved, and loved. . . . . And if God should have yet a wider circle of truth to open up to us out of his word concerning his Son, why should he not construct a new apparatus for the illustration of that truth?"†

On reading these statements, a number of thoughts crowd into the mind, of which the following are a few.

1. Such startling literalism goes a great deal farther than its advocates are willing, or indeed able to carry it. They are compelled to stop short; and, so doing, it becomes evident that their principles of interpretation are radically wrong. To show this, we have but to go through with the literal interpretation of their own passages. Thus,

> Isa. ii. 2, 3: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in

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* Lent Lect. for 1847 ("Good Things to Come"), pp. 165–167.

† Coming and Kingdom, &c., p. 222.

As I shall have occasion to quote a few words from Mr. A. Bonar's "Leviticus" on this subject by and by, I merely refer here to his "Redemption," ch. vi.

> the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Here, as in so many other cases, the unbelieving Jews and the pre-millennialists are substantially at one, and alike opposed to the overwhelming majority of Christians. Both maintain that the "Zion" of this prediction is the literal "mountain" on which stood "the Lord's house" of old; both hold that "the house of the God of Jacob," to which all nations are to flow, is a literal and material temple to be thereon erected; both understand the "flowing" and "going up," to refer to a literal pilgrimage to this central and metropolitan seat of future worship; and, finally, both interpret "the law" which is to "go forth out of Zion," and the "word of the Lord" to issue "from Jerusalem," of no revelation yet vouchsafed—no "law" and "word" already in the Church's hands—but of *new revelations* of the Divine will, to be made at Messiah's coming—his second coming, say the one—his first and only coming, say the other.

Now, how is the thing here predicted to be literally done? To talk of the Gentile nations going up to Jerusalem "from year to year" (Zech. xiv. 16), and "from one new moon to another," yea, "from one sabbath to another" (Isa. lxvi. 23), by *deputies*, or in some such way, and to tell us of the increased facilities of communication with the most distant localities which in our day have been opened up, and will, at the time here referred to, be vastly greater, will not do here. It does not meet the requirements of the prediction. The whole religious worship and obedience of the nations is made to radiate from, and to hold of, this metropolitan temple-service at Mount Zion. They go up hither, "*because* out of Zion goes forth *the law*, and *the word of the Lord* from Jerusalem."

Then, on the literal principle, where is *Christianity*, as it now exists? Where its "law," its "word of the Lord," its New Testament? *It is not here at all.* Literalism refuses to acknowledge its presence, and in place of it holds forth a revelation issuing from the sacred centre of the world, at a period which the Jew and the pre-millennialist agree in believing to be still *future.* The prophecy does not say merely that there will be *more* revelation then than now,—some *additions* to the stock already in our possession,—as Mr. Bickersteth, Dr. M'Neile, Mr. Wood, the Duke of Manchester, &c., speak—but that the kingdom is to be *constituted*, and all the religious service and obedience of the world to *take law* from what is there and thence to be proclaimed. And, in this view of it, which is clearly what the prediction intimates, is there a Christian who does not see that the Jew has completely the better of us on pre-millennial principles? Gentlemen, he will tell us, you may speak of Messiah's *second* advent supplying what his *first* failed to bring; you may tell me that the present state of things is rather the preparation for the kingdom than the kingdom itself, which was not to be manifested in its *primary* sense under this dispensation: But put me through this prediction of Isaiah upon your principles. The ordinary interpretation of Christians one can understand, that it means your *Christianity universally embraced*, or the world baptized into, and cordial observers of, your New Testament law and worship. The Jewish view of it also is intelligible—that *the one revelation*, after the times of the prophets, and in the days of Messiah, *is yet to come.* But *two* "laws going forth from Zion—two words of the Lord from Jerusalem"—one not here expressed at all, but, as you say, *understood*—the other explicitly declared to be the very law of the kingdom and rule of the Church: this will not do.

2. The literal interpretation of these prophecies brings out opposite and contradictory results, and so is demonstrably false. Thus, "In that day there shall no more be the *Canaanite* or the *uncircumcised* in the house of the Lord of hosts." (Zech. xiv. 21.) "So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be *holy*, and there shall no *strangers* pass through her any more" (Joel iii. 17.) And lest any one should say that the converted Gentiles will then be regarded as Israelites and no "strangers," hear the following from Ezek. xliv. 9, "Thus saith the Lord God, No *stranger*, uncircumcised in heart, *nor uncircumcised in flesh*, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel." Perhaps it may be said, That merely intimates that the Israelites are to have ordinances of their own, with which the converted Gentiles, in *their* services at Mount Zion, are not permitted to intermeddle. I answer, no such distinction is drawn in Isaiah's prediction, already quoted; nay, the reverse is studiously expressed. If his language means any thing literally, it means that the whole world is to become *one great Israelitish nation and Church, with one temple, one worship*, and *one law* in common. The nations not only go to Jerusalem—which the above texts, when literally interpreted, *positively forbid*—but they "go up to the *mountain* of the Lord's house, to the *house* (itself) of the God of Jacob," which in Jewish phrase means, beyond doubt, to do all that is competent to an Israelitish worshipper. Either, then, all nations will submit to the literal rite of circumcision, in order to qualify themselves for entering Jerusalem and the house of the Lord,

forbidden to the uncircumcised—which no pre-millennialist that we know holds—or the prediction is not to be literally interpreted at all. Even the Jews do not look for the literal circumcision of all nations. In this, however, they only show how untenable is their ground, in attempting to justify their unbelief from their own prophets. When they point to such a prediction as this of Isaiah, to show that Christianity has not realised it in its literal sense, our reply is triumphant: "You do not expect it to be realised yourselves. You admit that Gentiles are not to be circumcised, and you talk of 'the precepts of Noah,' as all they will be required to observe for salvation. But that is not the doctrine of this prediction. In its literal sense, it obviously announces the JUDAIZATION OF THE WHOLE WORLD; and if even you think this too much to believe, you must fall back upon some other principle of interpretation than the literal."

Or, try the effect of literalism upon Mal. i. 11: "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." Are there any except *Romanists*, who take "incense" here, and the "pure offering" *literally?* Do not all understand the prediction to mean simply this, that not at Jerusalem only, but every where, and not by Jews only, but by all nations without distinction, from one end of the world to the other, *acceptable worship* shall ascend to God? And how is it that all unite in so understanding it? Clearly because "*incense*" and "*offering*," in the Jewish sense, having given place under the Gospel to "spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," *there is no other kind of worship* of which we can understand the prediction; and all that I insist on is, that this principle of prophetic interpretation be carried through all cases of like nature.

But the Jewish idea, under which this prediction is couched, is not merely that "incense and a pure offering" shall be offered to God by all nations, but "*in every place*"—as if they would have the temple service at home, and not need to go to Jerusalem for it. Now we have seen, that in other places the reverse of this is expressly predicted. In Isaiah and Ezekiel, the catholicity of the Church's worship is expressed by all nations flowing to Jerusalem, and going up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; whereas in Malachi, *instead of them going to the temple, the temple is represented as coming to them.* If, then, we would not make the prophets contradict themselves, we must understand both representations as designed to announce just the *catholicity* and *spirituality* of the Gospel worship.

3. The results of this literalism are in flat contradiction to the New Testament. If it is possible to gather any thing from the last and clearest revelation of God's mind and will, this is a New Testament truth, That THE WALL OF PARTITION BETWEEN JEW AND GENTILE HAS BEEN BROKEN DOWN, NEVER MORE TO BE REBUILT.

> "He is our peace, who hath made both (Jew and Gentile) one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us: having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances. Now therefore ye (Gentiles) are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. ii. 14, 15, 19.)

It is impossible for language more clearly to intimate that Jews and Gentiles are placed, by the work of Christ, *on a footing of perfect equality* before God, not only in point of acceptance, but *as members of the Church visible.* Premillennialists make this to mean merely that Gentiles have now access to Christ and salvation, as well as Jews. But

Christ and salvation were never inaccessible to Gentiles. The ceremonial barriers placed them in a more disadvantageous position, in this respect, than the Jews, but that was all. And it is just these *ritual disadvantages* which the apostle says have been taken out of the way, to make room for a new incorporation of both into one fellowship, having all things common, as pertaining to the "*city*" and "*house*" of God. The ceremonial sacredness of places, persons, times, vessels—all typical institutions and observances—have yielded to the spiritualities and simplicities of the New Testament, to the genius of which all such distinctions are utterly foreign.

But our Lord's announcements to the woman of Samaria, when consulting him about the proper place of (*central*) worship, are, if possible, still more explicit:—

> "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall *neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem*, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him." (John iv. 21–23.)

Does this mean that, under the new economy, the worship of Gentiles *out of* Jerusalem would be as acceptable as the worship of the Jews *in it*—that the *central and sacred* character of Jerusalem would continue unchanged; but that believing Gentiles, though as much "strangers and foreigners" as ever, as truly "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel" as ever, in respect of ceremonies, and Church officers, and modes of worship, would nevertheless get access to *Christ* and *salvation* as truly as the Jews? Could such a construction, by possibility, be put upon the Saviour's language, one could listen to the arguments for a millennial Judaism. But as, beyond all doubt, the

Saviour meant to announce that Jerusalem was going to lose its peculiar character—that it would cease to be, even to the Jews themselves, "the city of their solemnities, whither the tribes should go up"—that, in fact, it would possess not a whit more of distinctive religious character than the mountain of Samaria, about which the woman consulted him—I cannot but wonder that Christian men, sitting at the Redeemer's feet to receive the law at his mouth, should dream of a revived Judaism, and picture to themselves "believing nations frequenting the" restored "temple, in order to get understanding in the types and shadows; looking on the sons of Zadok ministering in that peculiar sanctuary, to learn portions of truth with new impressiveness and fulness."* Ah! brother, never more shall Jerusalem be "the city of the great King"—the place of Jehovah's special presence and power, grace and glory, in connexion with a ceremonial worship. "In Salem was his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion." (Ps. lxxvi. 1.) But by the work of Christ these localities are stript for ever of their ceremonial sacredness. "Salem" and "Zion" are now in every place where "the Father is worshipped in spirit and in truth." It is this very change beyond all doubt which the apostle designed to express, when he said to the Hebrews, who were clinging to the *local* Jerusalem and the *literal* Zion, after all their glory had passed away, "But YE ARE COME UNTO MOUNT ZION, AND UNTO THE CITY OF THE LIVING GOD, THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM"—(Heb. xii. 22)—the Zion and Jerusalem of a catholic and spiritual and heavenly Israel—the only Zion and Jerusalem that will ever, in any *religious* sense, exist upon earth. To say in the face of such a statement, that the religious peculiarities of the local Jerusalem and the literal Mount Zion are either not abolished at all, or abolished only for a time, to be again restored, is, I must say, intolerable.

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* Bonar's (A.) "Leviticus." Preface, p. x.

"The Church-polity," says good INCREASE MATHER—father of the well known Cotton Mather, and a pre-millennialist—"which Israel shall then [in their converted and restored state] be under, shall not be a carnal one, not as was from Moses unto Christ, but a very spiritual polity; for they shall be no more under the Mosaical pedagogy—no more under the ceremonial law It hath been charged upon those who did in the primitive times assert the glorious reign of Christ upon earth, that they did also maintain that there would be sacrifices and other ceremonies of Moses' law: So *Jerome* (on Jer. xix. 10, and on Zech. xiv. 10), saith that the ancient doctors held. I do believe that that is *a very injurious charge;* and that it *never once entered into the heart of any of those godly and learned teachers in the Church to imagine such a thing.* However, sure I am, that the word of the Lord is express to the contrary. Hence, the Jews, after their conversion, are said to be under, not the old, but the new covenant; that is, not under the old but the new *manner* (for the covenant of grace, as to the substance of it, is for ever the same) *of administration* of the covenant. Hence, the Lord saith to Israel, "But not by thy covenant." (Ezek. xvi. 61.) The truth is, that Christ, by his coming, abolished the ceremonial law and nailed it to his cross, and buried it in his grave. AND A MOST LOATHSOME WORK DO THEY PERFORM, BOTH TO GOD AND MAN, THAT DIG UP THE CEREMONIES OUT OF THAT GRAVE WHERE JESUS CHRIST BURIED THEM ABOVE SIXTEEN HUNDRED YEARS AGO."*

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* The Mystery of Israel's Salvation Explained and Applied: or, a Discourse concerning the General Conversion of the Israelitish Nation. By Increase Mather, M. A., teacher of a Church in Boston, in New England. Printed in the year 1669. Pp. 113, 114.

JOSEPH PERRY, too, in his comments on those passages in which tem

What would this worthy man have said, had he heard Mr. A. Bonar expatiating on the lessons to be taught by the restored sacrifices—had he heard Mr. H. Bonar dwelling on the *need* of them amidst the blaze of Messiah's glory—had he heard Mr. Freemantle telling a Christian audience, that in the restored temple "the burnt-offering will be discerned by an enlightened eye, and will call to mind the lost and ruined state of man in Adam—wholly consumed. The *sin-offering* will set forth actual trespass, shortcoming. The *peace-offering* and *thank-offering*, the abounding and exceeding great love of God our Saviour: As *the blood flows from the victim*, the mind will trace the characters of death on account of sin, and in those very characters decipher life in atonement for sin. And as in vision John beheld *a Lamb as it had been slain*, so will the Israelite *behold in reality the type* (that is, beasts literally slain) and the antitype face to face!" (*Ut supra.*) When the author of this Lecture adds, immediately after the words quoted, "O happy and blessed period! In that day shall the *flocks* of Kedar be gathered together unto thee, the *rams* of Nebaioth minister unto thee," one feels disposed to ask, Were the two men of the same *religion?* But it is said, "The account of this (restored) temple, which occupies chapters xl. to xlvi. of Ezekiel, is embedded in literalities on either side. . . . . Here, then, lies the difficulty. All seems literal on either side; and is there to arise, in the midst of this, a great spiritual building, possessing nothing in common with the literalities around it? The point of difficulty lies *there*"[*] To this I unhesitatingly reply, *Let the literalities go*, if they cannot stand with the naked and unmistakeable announcements of the Lord of the temple. I do

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ple-language is employed, never seems to imagine any but a figurative interpretation of them.

[*] Bonar's "Redemption Drawing Nigh," p. 99.

not quite see, indeed, that we are shut up to the alternative of losing all literalities, or making everything literal. But I am perfectly prepared to part with whatever may be demanded by a firm adherence to the announcements of Christ. True, "there are many dark things in the word;"* but they will become darker still, if, instead of explaining the dark things by the clear, we *explain the clear things by the dark, making the Old Testament the key to the New.* It is this unnatural method which lies at the foundation of all the *Jewish* expectations of Christians; and never till we reverse the process are we safe from the danger to which JEROME alludes, of *Judaizing our Christianity*, instead of Christianizing the adherents of Judaism.

As a last refuge, we sometimes hear it said, that, though an Aaronic priesthood, and bloody sacrifices, and circumcision, and a metropolitan ceremonial at Jerusalem, may be unsuitable to the genius of the *present* economy, they may, for aught that we know, be consistent enough with *one to come.* This surely is a desperate argument. Nor should I allude to it, but to ask the reader whether this be the impression which he gathers from the Apostle's reasonings on the subject of the ceremonies, in the epistles to the *Galatians*, *Colossians*, and *Hebrews?* Was it only the *abuse* of them against which he wrote? Or was it only their *temporary* removal which he contemplated, in the view of their ultimate restoration? Does he not characterise them as, *in their own nature*, "worldly rudiments," "beggarly elements," the mere discipline of minors, as a "bondage" unsuited to the liberty of Christ's freemen? (Gal. iv.) Are they not represented as "a shadow," of which "the body is Christ" for the entire neglect and abandonment of which Christians ought not to allow themselves to be "judged" by Judaizing zealots, who were swarming in some of the infant churches, and whose policy it was to sap and mine whatever was *spiritual*, and *free*, and *catholic* in the new economy? (Col. ii.) Is not the priesthood said to be "changed," and the ceremonial institute to be "disannulled," expressly "*because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof?*" Now, to what order did those "sons of Zadok" belong, the "ministrations" of whose descendants in the restored temple are expected to give "new impressiveness and fulness to certain portions of truth?" They belonged, as every one knows, to that very Aaronic order which the apostle says has been swept off the stage of the Church, with all that appertained to it, as a weak and useless thing after Christ's coming. Yet farther, is not the co-existence of two priesthoods regarded as a thing incongruous; and does not the apostle represent the whole ritual system as in a "decaying, antiquated, and evanescent" state, when he wrote? (Chap. viii.) Now, is it conceivable that such language would have been used of a system only temporarily set aside, to be brought back, with a few changes, to more than its pristine splendour? If such expectations, or any thing like them, are not directly in the teeth of all that the apostle says on the subject of the temple service, he has used language which it was next to impossible not to misunderstand, and which the whole Church, with hardly an exception, *has* misunderstood.

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* "Redemption," p. 103.

It gives me extreme pleasure to be able to enrich my pages with the following statement of the *Duke of Manchester*, which for acuteness and force of argument is all that I could desire on the subject of this chapter, and which, considering the quarter from which it comes, may have a weight with the brethren from whom I differ which my own statements may not possess. The intrinsic value of the extract will compensate for its length.

"The sacrifices," says his Grace, "mentioned by Ezekiel, seem to me quite unsuitable to any period of the Church *after the first advent of Messiah;* for, according to the epistle to the Hebrews themselves, the sacrifices mentioned by Ezekiel are those very ones which are done away by Christ. In Ezekiel there is provision for slaying the sin-offering and the trespass-offering (xl. 39). . . The apostle, quoting from the 40th Psalm, says 'Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not; in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure:' then applying this quotation, he says (Heb. x. 5, 9), 'He taketh away the first that he may establish the second.' The sacrifices that were by the law must be abolished, in order that the offering of Christ might be established. Would there not then be a remembrance of sin, in opposition to the blessing of the new covenant (Heb. viii. 12), 'Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.' Again, there is mention made of the bullock whose body was to be burnt without the sanctuary (xliii. 21); which the apostle applies to Christ suffering without the gate, and to the necessity which there was for those who would enjoy the benefits to be derived from Christ, of going without the pale of Jewish ordinances: while those who continue in the use of the ceremonial law have '*no right*' to partake of Christ (Heb. xiii. 10–13).—Again, according to Ezekiel, circumcision was to be imperative not only amongst the Jews, but with strangers (xliv. 9); while the apostle tells us (Gal. v. 2–4), 'If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.'—And lastly, in Ezekiel's temple the passover was to have been regularly observed (xlv. 21); but [since] 'Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us,' are we to go back to what are now 'beggarly elements'?

"Perhaps the advocates for the restoration of sacrifices would say they are to be commemorative or eucharistic; *I say this view appears more objectionable than the spiritual hypothesis*, because that only evades Scripture, *this opposes it;* for the object of these sacrifices is expressly declared—they are for him that erreth, and they are to reconcile, to cleanse, and to purge (Ezek. xlv. 20; xliii. 20; xlvi. 20). If they were intended as eucharistic, they would not be called '*sins*' and '*trespasses;*' they would rather be called 'peace' and 'thank-offerings;' but we have these mentioned also (xlv. 17, *margin*), and distinct from the 'sin and 'burnt-offerings.'* . . . I think it possible that the prophecy of Ezekiel may in part become the *occasion* of those Jews who reject Messiah having recourse to those 'beggarly elements;' AND I THINK IT IS A SUBJECT OF VERY GRAVE CONSIDERATION, WHETHER WE CHRISTIANS MAY NOT PUT A STUMBLING-BLOCK IN THE WAY OF THE JEWS, BY ADMITTING THAT THE RESTORATION OF SACRIFICES, AFTER THEY HAVE BEEN DONE AWAY IN CHRIST, CAN BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WILL OF GOD. . . . . To think now of re-establishing any sacrifices which must be done away in Christ, would be *utterly unsuitable to the Church; it would be turning again to the weak and beggarly elements; therefore all that portion of Ezekiel's vision which refers to them*, to use the apostle's expression, *must have grown old*. . . .

"I find in prophetic language sacrifices used figuratively, to denote prayer (Ps. cxli. 2); praise (Ps. liv. 6, Jer. xvii. 26, xxxiii. 11); thanksgiving (Ps. cvii. 22, cxvi. 17); joy (Ps. xxvii. 6); righteousness (Ps. iv. 5, li. 19); confession (Ps. lvi. 13); contrition (Ps. li. 17); judgments (Isa. xxxiv. 6, xlvi. 10, Ezek. xxxix. 17–19, Zeph. i. 7, 8.) I find that *some of the instances adduced by the advocates of literal sacrifices, if taken literally, would prove more than those advocates would admit, for they refer not to the Jews, but to Gentiles*, e. g., Isa. xix. 21; lvi. 7; Mal. i. 11.† And when I find in the New Testament that believers are a royal priesthood (1 Pet. ii. 5, 9), and, as priests, partake of the altar (Heb

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* It is impossible, I think, that the Messrs. Bonar, and those who with them look for the restoration of *animal* sin-offerings and burnt-offerings, as *eucharistic* memorials of Christ's death, should not feel the force of this argument.

† The last of these examples has been commented on for the purpose of showing that the altar of burnt-"offering" and the altar of "incense" will be not at *Jerusalem* only, but "in every place," if it is to be taken literally. (P. 368.) His Grace adduces it, and the other two passages, to show that the *Gentiles* will in that case offer *Jewish* sacrifices. Is not this what I have termed the JUDAIZATION OF THE WHOLE WORLD? Nothing can be clearer than that this is what all these prophecies announce, if they are to be interpreted *literally;* and if this is too much even for a *Jew* to take in, we *must* fall back upon the figurative sense as the only rational and self-consistent one.

xiii. 10; 1 Cor. x. 16, 21), as priests offer spiritual sacrifices, whether of praise (Heb. xiii. 15), and good works (Heb. xiii. 13, 16; Phil. iv. 18), or whether of themselves either in life or death (Rom. xii. 1, xv. 16; Phil. ii. 17; 2 Tim. iv. 6); I am induced to believe that the prophets refer to the spiritual and reasonable services indicated by the typical ordinances, *rather than the beggarly elements themselves.* Nor do I think that this mode of interpretation can justly be charged with being a departure from the principle of literal interpretation.* Each of the sacrifices enigmatically signified certain determinate parts of spiritual worship; the prophets, who lived during the dispensation of shadows, used the language current at that time, and conveyed the ideas of the things symbolized, under the terms of the symbols themselves. In saying this, we do not admit any thing *arbitrary* in the principles of interpretation; the literal sacrifices were forms by which the spiritual worship of the enlightened Jew was expressed, and shadows of a time of reformation; the prophets conveyed by *words* what the ceremonial worship expressed by *things;* and it is no more arbitrary in the one case than in the other, to say that they predicted not the shadow but the substance, not the form but the spirit of true worship. Nor is there any thing *indeterminate* admitted; for as the prophets take their language from the ceremonial appointments, and as each species of sacrifice symbolized a determinate idea, so the language, when used figuratively or symbolically, equally conveys a fixed and determinate idea.† Why may not 'the rams of Nebaioth'

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* One is almost amused at the jealousy with which his Grace anticipates and repels this objection. Undoubtedly, he "departs from the principle of literal interpretation" in the only sense in which its advocates contend for it; and the grounds on which he defends himself in the next sentence from the charge which his friends will of course, and with justice, bring against him, are the very grounds on which I myself feel warranted and constrained to apply the *figurative* principle to these prophecies.

† Nothing can be more admirable than these defences against the charge of *arbitrary* and *indeterminate* interpretation, which is continually made by the strict *literalists.* I only hope his Grace will allow me to take the benefit of it; and if I go beyond the legitimate application of t *in any case*, I shall gladly submit to his correction. I certainly

(Isa. lx. 7), be understood symbolically, as well as 'the fatlings of Bashan' (Ezek. xxxix. 18), or 'the kidneys of rams' (Isa. xxxiv. 6), or 'the calves of the lips' (Hos. xiv. 2)? If it be said that the Egyptians shall 'do sacrifice and oblation' (Isa. xix. 21), is it violent to look for the explanation in the following words, 'Yea, they shall vow a vow and perform it?' Is it unreasonable to suppose that the burnt-offerings and sacrifices of the Gentiles denote the *prayer* which all nations will offer in God's house, or even to understand *the burnt-offerings and sacrifices of* THE JEWS *mentioned in connexion with the sacrifices of praise*, AS THEMSELVES INDICATIVES OF SPIRITUAL WORSHIP? *

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need not. Should his Grace get his eye on *Lowe's Magazine* for *Oct.*, *Nov.*, *Dec.*, 1847, he will find in the papers on the "*Restoration of the Jews*," that I am as jealous as he is of "arbitrary and indeterminate" interpretation.

* Finished Mystery, pp. 253–257, 260–262.

It may be asked how his Grace "thinks the latter chapters of Ezekiel can be understood according to the literal simplicity of the language, without being contrary to the analogy of faith." It is soon told. "The promise [of this whole temple-worship] was altogether *conditional* on their 'putting away their whoredoms, being ashamed of all they had done,' &c. (Ezek. xliii. 9–11.) . . . . But they did not take advantage of the proffered mercy; therefore *the promise lapsed*, and the Israelites have no warrant to expect that the offer as there made to them, will ever again be proposed." Pp. 256, 257.) I am afraid this will not do. It is the theory of those who deny the future *restoration*, and even national *conversion* of the Jews; who, finding that a great many more promises than this one are connected with a certain *preparation* of the people for the reception of them—which preparation was never realized by the *ancient* Israelites, to whom these promises were immediately addressed—consider them all as *lapsed*, so far as the Israelites were distinctively concerned in them, and now outstanding only in so far as they involve *evangelical ideas*, applicable alike to Jew and Gentile. His Grace, though he thus easily gets rid of Ezekiel, seems to deduce from other prophecies, "that a literal temple will be erected, and literal sacrifices offered, although not the typical *trespass-offerings* and *sin-offerings*," which he says these other prophecies are careful not to mention (p. 259)—a difference this between Ezekiel and the other prophets "which Mr. Brown (he says) seems to have overlooked." I think this "important difference" could easily be shown to be imaginary; but I cannot swell out farther this already too extended chapter. (Compare, however, the sacrifices mentioned as abolished—without respect to either Jew or Gentile—in Heb. x. 8, and the corresponding words in Hebrew, with those mentioned in Isa. lvi. 7, to which his Grace himself refers.)

I may be asked how I explain the last eight chapters of Ezekiel myself. That this is one of the dark and difficult parts of Scripture, is felt by all; but though no clear light could be thrown upon it, it is something to be able to say what it *does not*, and *cannot* mean. That it was meant for the second temple, or some other

Thus have I shown that Scripture affords no warrant for expecting the restoration of *Jewish peculiarities* during the millennium; that the literal way of interpreting those prophecies which are thought to express this, is not, cannot be, gone through with by either Christians or unbelieving Jews; that it brings out opposite and contradictory results, and so must be a false principle of interpretation; that such expectations are in flat contradiction to the most emphatic declarations both of our Lord and his apostles; that it is to retrograde from manhood to childhood to look for a conversion of the present *catholic* and *spiritual* economy into a vast, world-wide, *baptized Judaism*, having its head-quarters on the literal Mount Zion; and that the eucharistic theory, by which it is attempted to graft this doctrine, of animal sacrifices restored in the millennium, upon the faith of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, is, by the admirable showing of one of themselves, as untenable as it is repulsive to the best feelings of the Christian.

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which *might* have been built if the Jews had possessed a character which they did not—I cannot think, with any light which I at present possess. With still greater confidence do I reject all application of it to any literal *third* temple to be hereafter erected at Jerusalem. We seem, therefore, to be shut up to one general view of prophecy. The beams of *evangelical truth* which shine through several of its directions, lead me to look for the explanation of the whole in that direction, and to believe that a sober and patient investigation of the typical and symbolical language of the Old Testament, in the light of the New, would disclose in this prophecy—as Mr. A. Bonar says, though not quite in his sense—"*treasures hid in the sand.*" All the pains which Mr. H. Bonar has taken to expose the absurdity and contradiction to which the figurative view of this prophecy has given rise, will never drive me into the literal; nor is it fitted to have that effect upon any one who looks to the *principles* involved in the question.

CHAPTER V.

NO MILLENNIAL MIXTURE OF FAITH AND SIGHT.

We have seen that the pre-millennial theory begets some startling expectations. But I doubt whether any of them will surprise the simple reader of his Bible more than what is put forth upon *the vision of Christ in glory by mortal men during the millennium.* That I may not be charged with misrepresenting their sentiments, I will give them in their own words, and I shall quote from a variety of authors, that no one may say I palm upon them as a body the peculiar opinions of one or two individuals.

"In the millennial state," says *Mr. Brooks*, "there will be THE OPEN VISION OF CHRIST." * "It will be a dispensation in which the saints [in the flesh] WILL CONTINUALLY HAVE PERSONAL ACCESS TO CHRIST."† "Some are of opinion that the saints will not be mingled at all with men in the flesh, in the resurrection; or, at least, that they will only be occasionally manifested to them. I know of no decided Scripture authority for the opinion; whilst yet I confess, that, judging by *the reason of the thing*, there appears some degree of *plausibility* in it. In the meanwhile it is evident that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are again to dwell in the renewed earth [during the millennium]; and as *they* will be of the resurrection, there seems no just reason why the rest of those who sleep in Jesus should not dwell on it likewise. . . . I conclude, therefore, that the resurrection-saints will undoubtedly dwell on earth, and 'have power over the nations,' though they will probably be *nearer to God*, and continually behold his glory, in a manner that *will not be enjoyed to* THE SAME EXTENT *by men of flesh and blood*." *

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* Abdiel's Essays: Investigator, vol. ii. p. 271.

† Elem. of Proph. Interp. p. 301.

The Duke of Manchester has here charged me with what I feel it necessary, once for all, to repel. If there is one thing which I have striven to avoid, it is putting into the mouths of my opponents what they do not believe, and have not said. To preclude any such charge, I have allowed them invariably to speak for themselves, as the large portion of my volume occupied by such extracts (too large many will think) will bear me witness. In some cases, however, to make the extracts intelligible to readers not very familiar with the distinctions to which this question has given rise, I have found it necessary to insert in brackets a slight explanation, for the accuracy of which I am of course responsible.

"There must," says *Mr. Elliott*, "be supposed, I conceive, a most intimate connexion of the earthly Jerusalem with the heavenly; the earthly Jerusalem being that on, or over which the glory of the new Jerusalem is to rest; like as Jehovah's pillar of fire on the tabernacle in the wilderness, or the more awful glory on the top of Sinai. Here, I say, it would seem that there is to be the meeting point of earth and heaven; and that

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In reference to these, his Grace says, "Mr. Brown, with the intention of making the sense more clear, has sometimes increased the confusion by adding words of his own to the quotations from others. See, for example, the quotation from Mr. Brooks on this very subject," [the one given in the text above.] Now, I will stake my whole credit upon the accuracy of that extract, with three words of explanation in brackets. If Mr. Brooks himself shall say that I have misrepresented or "confused" his meaning—if he shall say that by "the saints" who are "continually to have personal intercourse with Christ," he did *not* mean "saints in the flesh," but the *glorified* saints, I will submit to his Grace's correction. But as the whole passage, to those who read it all, proclaims its own meaning beyond possible misapprehension, I submit whether it was quite right in his Grace to throw out such a charge. I could wish, indeed, that some of my critics had been as jealous of putting words into *my* mouth as I have been in their case. I do not apply this remark, however, to the Duke of Manchester, whose references to my statements—though sometimes brought together in rather strange and almost ludicrous connexions—seem unexceptionably accurate.

* Elem. of Proph. Interp. p. 33.

same conjunction to be VISIBLY MANIFESTED of the ultimate blessedness of the *spiritual* [then in glory] and of the *natural* seed of Abraham [continuing a nation in the flesh]: a conjunction and blending together of the two such, that it is often difficult if not impossible to discern in prophecy where the one ends and the other begins." *

"The gates," says *Mr. Lord* [of the New Jerusalem] "symbolize the *access to the glorified which the nations are to enjoy.* That they [the gates] are distributed equally to the several sides, indicates that they are to be accessible alike to the nations wherever they may reside; that there is to be no night there, that they [the nations in the flesh] ARE NEVER TO BE WITHOUT THE VISIBLE PRESENCE OF GOD; that its gates are never shut, that *the nations are to enjoy uninterrupted access to the glorified.* . . . . In the temple in Jerusalem, the mercy-seat—the symbol of the throne of God in the scene of the visible displays of his presence—was in the holy of holies, wholly *withdrawn from the sight of the worshippers,* and beheld only by the high-priest once a year. That there is *no temple* in the New Jerusalem, denotes therefore that *the presence of the Redeemer is to be* VISIBLE TO THE WORSHIPPERS AT LARGE—not, as under the Mosaic dispensation, veiled from their sight." †

"The manhood," says *Mr. Birks,* "the mystic heel of Emmanuel, which here below, on the cross, was bruised by the malice of Satan—SHALL BE VISIBLY REVEALED HERE ON EARTH IN THE BEAUTY OF THE RESURRECTION, shall be the source of a world's blessedness, and the centre of its holy adoration." ‡ "The nations who walk in the light of the New Jerusalem must imply others who are distinct from its citizens, and who *walk in the light that beams forth from that city of God.* . . . . The prophet adds, further, that the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there. This must surely refer to some who are not dwellers in the city, but *for whom a free access is thus provided.* . . . The nations here mentioned ('They shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it'), are evidently distinct from the bride of the Lamb, or from the mystical city, WITHIN WHOSE GATES they will bring their glory and honour." *

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* Hor. Apoc. *ut supra,* iv. 240.

† Expos. of Apoc. p. 531.

‡ Lent Lect. for 1843, *ut supra,* pp. 208, 209.

"All" [mankind], says *Dr. M'Neile*, "shall go to Jerusalem, to the feast of tabernacles, and SEE [with eyes of flesh] THE LORD OF HOSTS MANIFESTED IN THE HUMAN NATURE OF Jesus reigning in Mount Zion." †

"There does," says *Mr. Bickersteth*, "appear to the author considerable evidence that the Lord of glory will so dwell on earth as to be *visible in his glory*, in a manner, however, and to an extent, that we cannot adequately realise or comprehend. . . . The expressions (Luke i. 32; Ps. cxxxii. 14; Ezek. xliii. 7) are such as to imply *bodily and visible presence*." ‡

"To sum up all in one word," says *Mr. Maitland* of Brighton, "*the coming dispensation will not*, I contend, *be a dispensation of faith*, in the present acceptation of the term. *It will be of grace, but not of faith.* The Jew will not live upon promises, but hold the actual blessing in his hand. In that day they will *walk by sight*. Thus, there will be *a radical difference between their state and ours.* Now, *our whole economy is purely an economy of faith*, and all that is written *in our Scriptures* is adapted to the furtherance of a life of faith. 'We walk by faith, not by sight.' But it is said, concerning that day, 'when the Lord shall bring again Zion,' that then '*they shall see eye to eye.*' *It shall not be faith, but eye-sight with them—a visible glory which shall take up its abode on earth.*" (Isa xxiv. 25; Ezek. xliii. 2–5.) §

On these strange representations of the millennial state, it will not be necessary to say much. Truly, as Mr. Maitland says, "there will be a *radical* difference between their state and ours." It is not *our* Christianity at all. It puts not only the New Testament out of date, but the *religion* of mortal men which it describes. Every where in Scripture, *faith* and *sight*, *grace* and *glory*, are contrasted; and the one is represented as the *consummation*, and consequently as the *termination* of the other. Here, however, they are brought together, not as two coexistent and contemporaneous, but perfectly distinct and separated, states—that is at least intelligible—but as in open and visible communication with each other; all the nations of the earth walking in celestial light, and their kings bringing to the heavenly city—nay, *into it*—their miserable "glory and honour;" "holding intercourse" with the glorified; nay, "having continual personal access" to the very Object of all saving faith, and seeing his human nature reigning in Mount Zion; "walking not by faith but by sight; seeing literally eye to eye; a visible glory taking up its abode on earth."

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* Four Proph. Emp. *ut supra*, p. 309.

† Serm. on Sec. Adv. *ut supra*, p. 116.

‡ Guide, *ut supra*, pp. 275, 276.

§ Nine Discourses on the Parable of the Ten Virgins, note, p. 178. By the Rev. C. D. Maitland. Second edition, 1831.

What a mongrel state of things is this! What an abhorred mixture of things totally inconsistent with each other! It will not do here to refer, as several do, to the angelic visits with which individuals under the Old Testament were occasionally favoured; to the Saviour's transfiguration, and the appearance of Moses and Elias in glory to the three disciples on the holy mount; to the many bodies of sleeping saints which arose; and after Christ's resurrection went into the holy city, and appeared unto many; and to Christ himself eating and drinking with his disciples after his resurrection. He that does not see the difference between the two cases—between such *brief*, *rare*, and exceedingly *partial* glimpses of the world of glory vouchsafed to a few, and *a thousand years' constant personal access to the glorified Saviour, and open vision of the new Jerusalem in all its effulgence*—he that sees no difference between these two cases, or so little that the truth of the one perfectly reconciles him to the belief of the other—is not likely to be convinced by any thing I could say on the subject. Ordinary readers of the Bible, however, will probably be of opinion, that if the millennial state be one of *sight* it is no more of *faith*, otherwise sight is no more sight—Mr. Maitland, indeed, seems to go the whole length of that conclusion—and if it be of grace, it is no more of *glory*, otherwise grace is no more grace. And if some should be disposed to waive this consideration, and say, that any thing looking like probable Scripture evidence in favour of such mixture of faith and sight would go a great way with them, in spite of all their ideas to the contrary, he would find himself miserably put off on referring to their texts. More slender evidence, to use no stronger term, never was advanced in favour of a view of things which nothing but the most explicit testimony could render credible.

Admirable here are the words of JOSEPH PERRY, whose sweet humility in referring to his brother pre-millennialists, who held the very views expressed in the foregoing extracts, will not give him a lower place in the estimation of the Christian reader :—

> "Again," says he, "here is another thing looks very inconsistent, for converting work to go forward in this perfect state; and that is, *for the saints to live and converse together, while some are in a perfect, and others in an imperfect condition.* For if the great apostle John, so much endued with the Spirit of God as he was, could not bear the *visionary* sight of Christ in the first of Revelations, but fell down as one dead at his feet; how is it possible, then, that any of the saints should *behold the glory of Christ's Person in that day,—who will ten thousand times exceed the glory of all created beings, whilst they are unglorified; and therefore this cannot be so, for how can mortal and immortal, glorified and unglorified, perfect and imperfect, persons converse together?* This seems to me to be impossible. I know I am a poor, weak, nothing creature, and not worthy to carry some of these men's books; yet I cannot in this matter but think that my dear brethren must be mistaken concerning these things, and that THE MISTAKE LIES IN HOLDING

THE GRACIOUS AND GLORIOUS CHURCH TO BE TOGETHER AT ONE AND THE SAME TIME, which I cannot see nor believe that it will: but that the gracious Church will be first, upon the wonderful pouring out of the Spirit, and that the glorious Church will not be till after Christ's reign by his Spirit in the saints hath been fulfilled, and that then, upon Christ's personal coming from heaven with all the saints, when his wife, the Bride, or whole elect, shall be ready, by having all of them the garments or robes of glory and immortality on, will the glorious Church commence, and appear visible in the personal reign and kingdom of Christ." *

Mr. H. Bonar leaves this part of our subject untouched, so far as I have observed; unless the following paragraph be considered as his reply to what I have said :—

"We do not hold that Christ and his risen saints are to dwell in actual houses of lime and stone, such as we dwell in.† Their dwelling is in THE PAVILION CLOUD, or residence provided for them in the New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from God, and which rests over the earth just as the pillar of cloud did of old. From that, as the palace of the king in which they abide, they go forth continually, as vice-royal potentates, to rule the nations of the earth. Their position, office, and procedure, will be something similar to angels in the present age, who are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. Where is the degradation here? Where is the 'abhorred mixture' of which Mr. Brown speaks?" ‡

I am afraid this statement of what "we hold" will scarcely be accepted by those, at least, who penned the foregoing extracts—if I understand it aright. If "Christ and

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* Glory of Christ's Visible Kingdom in this World, pp. 227, 228.

† I was not aware that any had charged them with coming quite so low as this.

‡ Coming, &c., pp. 59, 60.

his risen saints" are to be shrouded up in this "*pavilion cloud*" from the view of the mortal inhabitants of the earth, his brethren, in these extracts, have very much misrepresented the pre-millennial expectation. The Duke of Manchester compares the view that men in the flesh are to have of our Lord, to that which the disciples had of him in the days of his flesh, and which he says has been happily expressed, as "*faith wrapped up in sight.*"* I am not sure that I comprehend this; but one thing is clear —it does not mean the "pavilion cloud." A brother who has contributed some able papers to the *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, said lately to myself that he believed Christ would be as visible to men in the flesh as I was to him, or as the Saviour himself was to the disciples in the days of his flesh; nor did he see where the difficulty lay.

A word, now, to both at once. "He shall come (we are told) IN HIS OWN GLORY, AND IN THE GLORY OF THE FATHER AND OF THE HOLY ANGELS." (Luke ix. 26.) Who will venture to say that this will not be a glory *visible to all men?* If it be, what room is there for any rational comparison between such a glorious display, and that to which the disciples were accustomed in the days of his flesh? But if Christ is *not* to be visible to men in the flesh, we must suppose him first to shine forth before them, when he comes in all his bright effulgence, and then to shut himself in within the "pavilion cloud," and be seen of them no more in their fleshly state. And what vestige of authority is there for that? None whatever.

I might ask, further, if Christ is to be out of sight of those who people the earth during the millennium, what is the meaning of the *Personal* Reign, and the *visible* kingdom on the earth? What will it matter to its mortal inhabitants, if their King is *invisible* to them, whether he *hover immediately over the earth*, or *remain where he now is?* Thus, shape this theory how we will, it seems equally unmanageable.

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* Finished Mystery, p. 338.

CHAPTER VI.

WAY OF SALVATION NO LESS NARROW DURING THE MILLENNIUM THAN NOW.

VERY loose is the language indulged in upon this point,—language which, though repudiated by some, is nevertheless the prevailing strain in the contrasts which are drawn between the present and the expected millennial dispensation.

" Concerning the *number* of true believers under this dispensation," says *Dr. M'Neile*, " we read, ' Many are called, but few are chosen. Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat ; because *strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, &c. ; and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity.' Concerning the *character* of true believers, we read, ' Love not the *world*, neither the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. The friendship of the *world* is enmity with God ; whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God. Therefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord.' These passages of Scripture avowedly *belong to this dispensation.* They have applied in every age, and do still apply to the true disciples of the Lord Jesus: But if the *world* become Christian, the world will no longer persecute Christians. If all the families of the earth be blessed with eternal life, THE WAY OF LIFE WILL BE NO LONGER NARROW. If the *world* become Christian, then Christians cannot *separate from the world.* It is obvious, that in the passage from our present state to a state of *universal holiness,* these characteristic sayings of the New Testament MUST CEASE TO HAVE ANY APPLICATION, AND BECOME OBSOLETE, NOT TO SAY FALSE."*

"The least consideration," says *Mr. Maitland*, in the note already quoted, "will serve to show that the New Testament supposed a *suffering* kingdom, and that its encouragements, exhortations, warnings, were addressed to a people *conflicting with the world, the flesh, and the devil.* The Master, as he delivered it, said, 'I am come to send fire on earth, not peace, but a sword;' and on this supposition is the whole revelation founded. Now, if we turn to the promises of God concerning the state of the world, after his ancient people shall have been brought in and made the light of the nations (as given in Isa. xi. xxv. lx. and elsewhere), and carry the *exhortations and warnings of our dispensation* to a people conditioned as they shall be, we shall at once see *how ill adapted* they would be to their times and circumstances. Christ says to his Gospel-church in every line, if not in word yet in spirit, '*Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation:* Behold I come as a thief,—a snare: be ye therefore like servants which wait for their Lord.' Take this thought with you to the sixtieth of Isaiah, and mark the incongruity. If such precepts as these were still needed, the condition there described could not exist. *Holy fear and jealousy*, from the sense of surrounding dangers, would effectually check the tide which we see flowing there. Their condition is evidently one *not militant but triumphant.*"

"When," says *Mr. Wood*, "the nations say, 'Come and let us go up to the house of the Lord,' shall it be true, THEN, that 'strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it?' "† Once more,

"Surely," says *Mr. Brooks*, "the kingdom will be already come, when all the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. *With what propriety, then, could men any longer be exhorted to 'seek' and to 'lay up trea-*

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* Lect. on the Jews, *ut supra*, pp. 78–80.

† Affirmative Answer, p. 32.

*sure,' and 'hope for' that which they will already be in possession of?"**

The confusion of thought which all these passages manifest, is such as can only be accounted for by the difficulty of defining a state which is made up of the most incongruous elements. Let us try to bring order out of it.

1. When the world ceases to persecute Christians, it will only be *that* on a great scale, which on a small one has been seen hundreds of times in the past history of the Church, and, on a scale smaller still, occurs in the domestic circle every day. "*Then had the churches rest,*" says the historian of the Acts, after Saul of Tarsus had been transformed out of a bloody persecutor into a glowing Christian, and, "walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." (Acts ix. 31.) Such rest, and such blessed consequences of it, have been more or less experienced in the Church from age to age since that time. *And what will the millennium be* —in one blessed feature of it—*but this same rest, and these same consequences of it, over the whole earth?* But what in this case (say our friends) becomes of such passages as these, "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" "I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword;" "The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father," &c.? Why, just what becomes of them when "one of a family," after having been the object of incessant and virulent opposition from an ungodly household, is blessed to the gaining of every one of them—when "those who spake against him as an evil-doer, do, by his good works which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." Of course the father is not *now* "divided against the son," &c. They are "all of one mind; they live in peace, and the God of love and peace is with them."

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* Abdiel's Essays, *ut supra.*

There is manifestly no difference at all between this case and that which we expect during the millennium over the whole earth. The *extent* is nothing. The *principle* is the only thing of consequence, and who does not see that that is the same in both cases? Yet you build out of this an argument for a *new dispensation!* (Compare Isa. xi. 9; ii. 3, 4; xxxii. 15–18.)

2. The argument for an entirely new state of things during the millennium, from the words, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," while it resembles the former one in shallowness, grates more upon the ear, and is more vicious in its tendency. It proceeds on a misapprehension of the real point of our Lord's statement, and unduly magnifies what is the least important part of it. What makes "the narrow way" to be narrow, is not that "few find it," but it is *because* of its narrowness that it is found by few. It is not because "many there be that go in thereat," that the way they take is called "the broad way," but it is because of its breadth that so many frequent it. *The one* way means just the course which pleases the flesh, is congenial to the carnal taste of every natural man, and consists in following the bent of corrupt nature; therefore it is called "*broad*,"—easily trodden, as its "gate" is said to be "*wide*," —easily got in at. *The other* way means just the opposite of this—resistance to all the desires of the natural man, the mortification of the flesh, obedience to the promptings of the opposite principle—the new, spiritual, heaven-born nature. If this be correct, it follows not only that men during the millennium, just as much as now, will naturally *prefer* the "broad" to the "narrow" way, if they be born in sin as we are, but that, left to themselves, every one in all time will walk in the former, and none at all in the latter: that the wonder is, not that "few," but that *any*

find it, and that these *few* find it purely in virtue of a supernatural principle, emancipating them from the "earthly, sensual, devilish" desires to which, in common with all other men, they are naturally in bondage. Now, as this is the secret of *any* man's finding the narrow way, so is it the secret of every man's finding it who is ever conducted to "life" upon it. What, then, is the difference between the present and the millennial state, in respect of this way? *Just the difference between grace plucking more brands out of the fire than now—between a less and a greater number of converted and holy persons.* That is all.

It is said, The way will no longer be narrow, when, instead of few, *many* find it? That is to make its *narrowness* to arise from its *unfrequentedness.* By so saying, you do something far worse than make the cause the effect, and the effect the cause; you put the real narrowness of the one way and breadth of the other out of sight altogether, and represent the millennial state as one in which men *will not find the way of life to be what it is to us*—a state in which they will not have to struggle against the corrupt tendencies of the natural man—a state in which the corruption of nature either will not exist at all, or will not have those characteristics which make it what it is, and which have been always the same since the fall. If this is not what you mean, your argument is inept, and your language fitted only to deceive.

But surely it will not *then* be said, "Few there be that find it," and if not, will not this statement be then inapplicable? The answer, if answer the question needs or merits, has been furnished already. "The father is" no longer "divided against the son," when the father joins the son in the bonds of the Gospel. When the sword of persecution is sheathed in any land, the Saviour's words, "I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword," before realised there, cease of course to be descriptive of the actual state of things in that land. In these and similar statements of Scripture, it is the *principle* of eternal hostility, between him that is born after the flesh and him that is born after the Spirit, which is to be seized upon. In this originates all the actual opposition to the cause of Christ and the members of his body which is displayed. It varies, of course, in the forms which it takes, in the places where it occurs, and in the extent to which it is permitted to go: sometimes the worse triumphs over the better, and puts it down; at other times it is the reverse; and the time is coming when those that are born after the flesh shall be the tail and not the head, all the world over. But who would ever speak of such statements as the above being *superseded*, either now—wherever true religion triumphs, in families, cities, or countries—or hereafter over the whole earth? So with the "few" that now find the narrow way, compared with what will be witnessed during the millennium. As the way will be the same then—and narrow then in the same sense and for precisely the same reasons as now—so *it will be nothing else than grace triumphing then over nature in more persons, and to a greater extent, than now.*

3. "If the world," says Dr M'Neile, "become Christian, then Christians cannot separate from the world." Is it possible that such a fallacy should stumble any one acquainted with Scripture language? What definition of that "*world*" from which Christians are commanded to separate, is given in the very passage which he quotes? "Love not the world," says the beloved disciple, "neither *the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world*, THE LUST OF THE FLESH, AND THE LUST OF THE EYE, AND THE PRIDE OF LIFE, *is not of the Father, but is of the world.*" Will none of these exist during the millennium, or require to be separated from? Take

riches,—one of "the things (now) in the world," and the love of which must be in this passage forbidden, seeing it is said to be "the root of all evil." Will this not be "in the world" during the millennium? or will money be any thing else then than what it is now, or will the "love of money" be more lawful? "THE LUST OF THE FLESH"—will that be extinct during the millennium, or may it be then cherished? "THE LUST OF THE EYES"—will that also be gone? And "THE PRIDE OF LIFE"? Or will they be any thing else then than now? The question, it will be observed, is not, Will men then *rise superior* to those things? but, *Will they have them to resist?* Dr. M'Neile's argument, if good for any thing, is this, that men during the millennium will not need to be warned against the love of the world—not because they will have so much of the Spirit that the world will make no impression upon them, though even that were no reason why they should never be warned—but because there will then be *no world to love*—no lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life, to require warnings against. And when we have got this length we are still not far enough; for unless it will then be lawful to "love" the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever, since 'the creature' will exist during the millennium, and quite as attractive, I should suppose, as ever it has been since the fall, there will be the very same reason then as now for the apostle's counsel, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world."

The reader will now know what to gather from Mr. Brooks' question, "With what propriety could men any longer be exhorted to 'seek,' and to 'lay up treasure,' and to 'hope for' that which they will be in possession of?" As this is spoken of the millennial condition of *mortal men*, it either means that they will, in the state of mortality, be in possession of heaven, and heaven's treasures, so as no longer to need hoping for them, as poor mortal men now have, who, with all "the first-fruits of the Spirit" they enjoy, are forced to "groan within themselves, *waiting*" for a very different state;—or else it has no meaning. I am inclined to think, that neither solution is perfectly correct. All the meaning which the statement has, is to the effect just expressed; but as I feel persuaded the author does not and cannot go that length, the rest must be set down to the nature of the expectation actually entertained, which in vain will any one attempt intelligibly to express.

In fine, the millennial state, according to the foregoing representations of it, will not be our Christianity at all. It has none of the characteristics of *a state of grace;* or, if this should be protested against as an unfair inference from their statements, let them give up contrasting the present with what they call the millennial *dispensation.* As well may they term the change from the persecuted to the peaceful state of the Church *before* and *after* Constantine, a change of dispensation; as well may they call by the same name the change from the bloody Mary to Elizabeth of England, and similar changes in Scotland and all the other kingdoms of Protestant Christendom. True, the change will be vastly more *extensive*, *permanent*, and *glorious*, that is to characterise the millennial period. But will there be one element in it that has not been already realised, and is not from time to time witnessed, on a smaller scale? Not one. When "the sovereignty of the world has become our Lord's and his Christ's" (Rev. xi. 15); when the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, is given to the people of the saints of the Most High; when Christ's dominion is from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; when men are blessed in him, and all nations call him blessed; when they have beaten their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks—nation not lifting up sword against nation, and none learning war any more:—then, of course, all the earth will be at rest and be still, save in the unwearied activities of well-doing. But even then, as the flesh will lust against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. so salvation in every case will then be as much a triumph of grace over nature as now.

CHAPTER VII.

MILLENNIAL BINDING OF SATAN—WHAT IT IS NOT, AND WHAT IT IS.

THIS is the last feature of the millennial period on which the simple truth of God's word has been obscured by unauthorised expositions. Pre-millennialists maintain—nor are they quite alone in this instance—that a TOTAL CESSATION OF SATANIC INFLUENCE during the millennium is predicted in the following passage of Scripture:—

> Rev. xx. 1–3, 7: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season. . . . And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison," &c.

Before examining this passage, let me put this question to the humble and dispassionate inquirer: If the expectation of an entire cessation of Satanic influence be indeed scriptural, how comes it to pass that no mention is made of it, nor so much as a hint given of it in all Scripture, but in this solitary passage, in a book the import of whose symbols has divided the Church to this day?*

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* They must be sadly at a loss who send us for additional evidence to Isa. xxiv. 21, 22. That the general idea expressed in that passage is

What candid person can refuse to admit that this is *suspicious?*

But this is not all. Not only is the thing nowhere else, but the expectation is contradicted by the whole teaching of Scripture elsewhere. There are three passages which express very clearly the mind of God upon this subject. The first is,

> 1 John iii. 8–10: "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God," &c.

Let me entreat attention to the teaching of this passage. It divides men into two great classes—those who sin, and those who sin not—styling the one class "the children of the devil," or those who are "of the devil;" and the other class "the children of God," those who are "born of God," or who are "of God." Farther, when the apostle says, "He that committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning," the meaning plainly is, that every sinning child of Adam is not only the seed of the old serpent, but is *actuated* by him in all the sin which he cherishes and commits. The same thing is manifest from the words that follow: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," or despoil him of his *children* and of

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symbolically developed in this of Revelation, is perfectly possible. But to adduce it as *another proof* of the total cessation of Satanic influence, only shows to what shifts they are reduced. The Duke of Manchester sees in "Rom. xvi. 20," a direct reference to this *millennial* binding of Satan! (p. 243) their *services ;* till which time every son of Adam, in what ever age and under whatever dispensation he may live, is possessed and actuated by the wicked one. In short, nothing can be more evident than that the apostle, in this passage, makes the devil *an inseparable part of the fallen system and reign of sin*, the parent of all its hateful brood, and the life of all its black fruits ; that he is dispossessed only in the persons of those who are "born of God ;" that such regenerate souls, and their escape from the devil's family and service, are the spoils of Christ's conquest over Satan in the days of his flesh ; and that all who are not vitally connected with this victorious Saviour are *still* the devil's children and servants, and all the sin they cherish and practise just the service they render him, "the works of their father which they do."

So much for men as *living* under a fallen system. The next passage views them as victims of *death* under that system, by virtue of their connexion with the first Adam, but emancipated through vital connexion with the second Adam :

> Heb. ii. 14, 15: "That through death he might destroy HIM THAT HAD THE POWER OF DEATH, THAT IS, THE DEVIL ; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

What "*the power of death*" is which the devil "had" till Christ stripped him of it on the cross, I have already endeavoured to express (p. 159). But the *legal* triumph of the Redeemer on the cross is one thing ; his *actual* triumph over the enemy, in any given case, is never till the prey be taken from the terrible, till "the brand be plucked from the fire," in the day of converting grace. All the power which the old serpent acquired over men, in righteous retribution for hearkening to his will—and, in particular the "power of death"—he unquestionably retains still over all who do not savingly believe on him, and over believers themselves till they are in Christ; for it is of them only that the apostle says, and of them only is it true, that they are "*delivered* who were all their lifetime subject to bondage." In that "bondage to the fear of death," then, over which the devil presides, all are held who believe not—over them he still has "the power of death."

This is brought clearly out by the third and last passage:—

Rom. xvi. 20: "THE GOD OF PEACE SHALL BRUISE SATAN UNDER YOUR FEET shortly."

This is spoken for the comfort of struggling Christians—announcing the speedy termination of all their troubles and annoyances, by the bruising under their feet of their grand adversary. This way of speaking clearly supposes that all that is hostile to the Christian, of whatever sort, is under the active presidency of Satan, and *so holding of him*, that the bruising of *him* under our feet—getting our feet upon the neck of Satan—is equivalent to the complete destruction of all that stands in the way of our salvation. If, then, there be a total cessation of Satanic power during the millennium, it must imply that, along with him, *every thing that stands in the way of a sinner's salvation has been taken out of the way.* But as few are prepared to go this length, the millennial "binding" of Satan *must* mean something short of this.

Taking these three passages together, then, they show clearly the connection of Satan with man in his fallen state. With that state he is bound up. As it came in by him, so it holds of him, and is never parted from him. We are in bondage to sin and him at once—we shake off both together. Sin and he are inseparable companions—

on earth and in hell. The tyranny of both is destroyed in regeneration; the partial power of both remains till death, in the regenerate—but that of the one *never more*, and *never less*, than that of the other; and at death, the believer sees the backs of both together.*

If this, now, be Scripture doctrine, the question of a *total cessation of Satanic influence* during the millennium is settled. If mankind during that period will get *above the law and conditions of the fall*, then may Satan have no power over them, and nothing to do with them. If man-

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* Mr. H. Bonar comments upon this and the preceding paragraph, as they appeared in my first edition, at great length, addressing himself to it once and again in the course of his volume. At one time he sees a denial of the *personality* of Satan; at another, a denial of the possibility of sin existing without the agency of Satan, and so, a denial of the total depravity of human nature. In view of this, he tells me I "stand on slippery ground." He "shall not employ," however, "language betokening any suspicion of my opinions regarding Satanic influence, for he has no such suspicion." For this I should be more grateful, if I thought I had written any thing to merit such suspicion. But I am quite content to leave that question to the intelligent reader of what I have written. I have slightly altered the former of the two paragraphs, which Mr. Bonar assails, merely to bring out what every one must have seen to be my meaning; but I have purposely left both paragraphs very much as they were, to show that I adhere to what I wrote. Not a word was said implying the impersonality of Satan; not a word to throw doubt upon the total depravity of human nature, or the possibility—*if God had so willed it*—of man being left to manifest that total depravity without any interference, the most remote, from Satan. But I had nothing to do with such possibilities. The only question handled in my paragraphs related to the *matter of fact*—whether the word of God warrants the belief that the depravity of human nature will ever be separated, in the way alleged, from the agency of "its father the devil." I have given some scripture grounds for believing that it will not, and that is all. The whole criticism I regard as frivolous in the extreme. Let my arguments be answered; but criticism of this sort will never advance the truth.

I do not apply these remarks to what Mr. Bonar has said on the *way* in which Satan is to be bound, and on my conception of *what* that binding is. His argument on these points will be noticed in its proper place kind will not be divided, as now, into the two great classes of *regenerate* and *unregenerate;* if all will be of one class —"born of God;" if there will be none who "commit sin" and "do not righteousness,"—none who either die out of Christ, or, though not dying at all, are not vitally united to the Resurrection and the Life—*then*, but only then, will the devil have no "children," none who are "of him," doing his work, yielding him service, and, "for fear of death," kept "all their lifetime subject to bondage" In a word, if the *unregenerate* be gone; if *sin in the regenerate*, with all its inseparable evils, be gone; if *the fall itself* be gone, during the millennium—then, undoubtedly, will it be distinguished by a total cessation of Satanic influence. But as this is not alleged—as no pre-millennialist has got this length—the doctrine which is built upon this one text of Scripture *must* be erroneous.

Having now seen what the predicted "binding" of Satan is *not*, let us now inquire what it *is*. Happily we possess a key to such language which all must admit to be unexceptionable. The Apocalypse is the best interpreter of itself; and a very little attention to its way of representing *Satan's power*, and *loss of power*, will make all plain.

In *chap. ii.* it is said of Pergamos, that "*Satan's seat*," or "*throne* (θρονος), was there," and that "there *Satan dwelt*." (Verse 3.) This certainly refers to the powerful *party* which Satan had in that place, and the *dominant influence* which through them he exercised in opposition to the gospel—a party made up of persecutors on the one hand, and licentious corrupters of the truth on the other.*

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* "This," says SCOTT, "must denote that Pergamos was not only a very wicked place in other respects, but also that it was, as it were, the head-quarters of both *persecution and heresy, the two principal engines of the devil in opposing the pure gospel of Christ, and that from thence these dire evils diffused their baleful influence to other cities.*"

If this be correct, the *unseating* or *dethroning* of Satan in Pergamos—his *banishment* from "where he dwelt"—would not mean *the total cessation of his influence* in that city, but just the destruction of the party which represented him, and did his work in opposing the gospel there.

In *chap. xii.* we read :

> "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; *neither was their place found any more in heaven.* And the great dragon was *cast out*, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was *cast out into the earth*, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is *cast down*, which accused them before our God day and night. And they *overcame him* by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is *come down unto* you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." (Verse 7–12.)

The general voice of Protestant interpreters pronounces this to be a symbolic prediction of the fall of Paganism, and the Christianization of the Roman empire—the prophetic "earth"—under Constantine. The "heaven" of the vision—the high places of the empire—is the disputed field, whose it shall be; whether the dragon who had it shall keep it, or Christ, who had it not, shall get it. The empire was Pagan, idolatrous, bloody. There "Satan's throne was—there he dwelt." Possessing it as the very life of it, influencing and directing all its movements, he used it as a dread engine of hell to crush the gospel and extirpate the Christians. This is the view of it given in the opening verses of the chapter, where the Church is represented as ready to give birth to her offspring—a race of Christians who were ultimately to rule all nations with a rod of iron, or, in other words, to crush all her enemies, and rule the world. To prevent this destruction of his kingdom, Satan is seen as "a red dragon"—a bloody persecutor—having "seven heads and ten horns, and crowns upon the heads;" which just means the empire, as is known to all familiar with the symbols of this book. In this character, then—as the very life and moving spring of the empire, "he stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born"—in plain terms, to exterminate the Christians. Now Christ is resolved he shall not only fail in this, but lose even the ground he had. The empire shall no longer be wielded by him as a terrible engine against the Church, and its power shall *change hands*. Its high places shall be occupied by the very party, and for the very interest which he was determined to crush. The heaven of the vision is lost—the high places of the empire are wrenched away from his grasp. The Christians supplant the Pagans in the throne, and all spheres of authority and influence under it. The empire, in this sense, is Christianised. What now becomes of him? He is "cast out into the *earth*, and his angels"—his minions in the war for Paganism—"are cast out with him;" and while rejoicings are held over his expulsion from the one sphere, a woe is pronounced over the other, because the devil has come down to it, all the more enraged since this first victory warns him to set his house in order, and be ready to quit that too. In other words, being expelled from power in the *higher* places of the empire, he is driven to try what he can do to keep possession in the *lower*—to preserve the Paganism of the masses, and the remote parts of the empire, and turn it still against the

Church, in the way either of opposition to it, or corruption of it.*

Now, here I would ask a question or two:

1. When "the dragon was *cast out* of the heaven" of this vision—"*neither was his place found any more in heaven*"—was there a total cessation of Satanic influence in those high places? Nothing of the sort is intended, and no such thing came to pass. *He lost his party.* He had no more *a friend* in these high places. And even this means, *not that there were no children of the devil there*, but only that he got nobody in those places to sustain his Pagan cause from that time.

2. When upon this "a loud voice was heard in heaven, saying, Now is come *salvation*, and *strength*, and *the kingdom of our God*, and *the power of his Christ*; FOR the accuser of our brethren is cast down," &c.—are we to understand that up to this time there had been no salvation, no strength, no manifestation at all of the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ? Certainly not. It means that the saving truths of the Gospel—before struggling for preservation in the earth—had become triumphant: that a hitherto *weak* cause and party had won its way to "strength," or a strong position; that "the *kingdom* of our God, and the *power* of his Christ" had, in these events, taken a glorious start—earnest of universal sway. All relates, not to the coming in of any thing *new*, but to the progress of what had been for centuries finding it hard, in the heat of continual persecution, to keep its ground.

3. When, in connexion with Satan's expulsion, we read the following description of his *trade*, which was thus, in a sense, ended—"And the great dragon was *cast out*, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world—*he* was cast out"—it irresistibly suggests

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* See the commentators.

the description of the 20th chapter, which it is our object to illustrate, as in all respects parallel with it, though far inferior in grandeur and comprehensiveness of symbol. The names given to the devil are in both places the same; and so is the description of his business—deceiving the world. And as this leads us to believe that the "*deception*" in both cases is similar—not of course by means of the same *things*, but of the same *public character*, with the view of *keeping his ground* in both cases in the same sense—so it suggests the same effect as following that expulsion in both cases. In both cases he is driven out from his former *standing and power against the Church* and cause of Christ: in the latter case more *universally* and more *thoroughly* than in the former; but that is all the difference.

4. When it is said that "the devil was cast out into the *earth*," does that mean that Satanic influence was for the first time brought then to bear upon the persons included under that term? Undoubtedly not; but only that, having lost his hold of the high places, he sought to *create a party* amongst those represented by this symbol. He did not "come down to them" in their *individual* capacity, or with the view of ruining *their own souls*—the vision has nothing to do with that—but he came down to get them *stirred up against the Gospel.* But, most important of all—

5. How was the expulsion of Satan out of the heaven of the vision *brought about?* "They"—the Christians—"overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Two things, it seems, did it. They "*believed* in their hearts, and they *confessed* with their mouths the Lord Jesus." By the one, in the privacy of their own conscience, they got cleansing and holy courage to do the other before men; and in doing it, "they counted not their own lives

dear unto them," so that the savour of that blessed name might be spread abroad. This carried, at length, all before it. The Pagans were unable to stand before the heroic testimony of pardoned men; they were beaten, routed, and fain to quit the field. The Gospel, in the persons of its living adherents—or rather Christ in his people—triumphed over Paganism, in the persons of its blinded votaries, or rather over Satan in his heathen tools.

And yet, while the defeat on the one hand and the victory on the other, were just *error flying before truth*—true religion triumphing over and expelling false—and, in consequence of this, *the votaries of each changing places* in the empire—this is represented as an *expulsion of the unseen head of the defeated interest, leaving the battle-field in exclusive possession of the victorious Redeemer.* "THE GREAT DRAGON WAS CAST OUT"—that is the SYMBOL: "THEY (the Christians) overcame him by the blood of the Lamb"—that is the plain, the *divinely authorized* EXPLANATION OF THE SYMBOL.

It is impossible not to see the bearing of all this upon the explanation of the opening vision of the 20th chapter.

As we proceed in tracing the *style* of this symbolic book regarding Satan, we find the same empire again in possession of the dragon, in another form. The seven heads and the ten horns are there as before; but the crowns are now on the *horns*, (chap. xiii. 1.) This refers to the empire after it fell before its Gothic invaders, and was broken up, and at length consolidated into ten independent kingdoms. The engine he now wields, by means of the empire, is ecclesiastical. He has turned Christian in order to destroy Christianity. He betrays it with a kiss. He first *heathenises* Christianity and the Church, and then he wages war—with all the strength of the empire, in connexion with its ecclesiastical chief of the seven hills—against "the saints of the Most High" who will not submit to, and fall in with his heaven-blaspheming, Christ-dishonouring, soul-destroying system. It is *Popery*.

But in this last and most formidable character he is destined to be " cast out," as before. The battle here also is of the same character, and won in the very same way. " These (ten horns, or kingdoms of the Papal dragon) shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall *overcome* them"—in the same sense as we saw he did in the days of Paganism—" for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." (Chap. xvii. 11.) To make this army of "called, chosen, faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ," to be the *glorified saints* who will come with him at his second appearing, is every way preposterous. It is manifestly the same company of faithful ones mentioned in the 14th chapter, and described as "the undefiled" party, who, amidst the almost universal unfaithfulness to Christ's truth and cause, "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." (Ver. 4.) It is a battle, just as before, *between Christ's truth and the devil's lies, in the persons of their respective adherents among men.* The lies are different, but the lying character of both systems, and their enmity against all that stood in their way, is the same. Christ is represented as coming out of heaven on a war horse, as the captain of a band of celestial horsemen, and with all the insignia of his trampled rights, as the prophet, the priest, and the king of his Church, to give battle to the confederate enemies of his blessed sway. The battle is fought and won. " The beast"—antichrist—" is taken," and goes whence it came—to hell. " The remnant are slain"—the adherents of the defeated interest are crushed—and all remaining *appearance* in behalf of it vanishes. (Chap. xix. 11 to end.)

The *capture* of the beast, and the *consignment of it to hell*, having reference to a *public body*, a vast organised *confederacy*, must be interpreted according to the only way in which retribution can light upon such bodies. And how little individuals, *as such*, have to do with the whole subject, appears from the songs of triumph which here, as before, are sung over the glorious issue: "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and *ye saints and apostles and prophets*, for God hath avenged you on her, (xviii. 20.) Now, the Papal system denoted by "her" was not in existence for ages after "the apostles and prophets" had, as *individuals*, gone the way of all the earth. Yet *they* are said to be avenged on Babylon. What *can* this mean, save as the victory of their *doctrine* or *principles* which the Papal system sought to destroy? In the same sense we are to interpret every similar statement in this book. So, likewise, are we to understand such sayings as these, "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." It is just the *cause* of the Lord which has become triumphant over the dragon's Anti-christian, as before over his Pagan party.

Well, we have found one party of the dragon falling after another; and we naturally look to be told *what party he is to be allowed to form next.* The answer of the 20th chapter is—*None at all.* He is removed from the earth, and chained up for a thousand years, during all which period he shall no more deceive the nations. After what we have found to be the style of this book, on the subject of Satan's "deceptions"—after the key with which the preceding part of it has furnished us, for opening these perfectly similar representations—can the meaning remain doubtful? It is just this: That, during that happy period, the cause of Christ should carry it every where, and Satan be allowed no lodgment in any spot on the globe to form a public party in opposition to Christ; that in this sense, *his trade will be at an end*; that representatives and tools for the doing of such work, he will have *none*—as if men should wonder where he was, and go in search of him, but find him nowhere—he has been swept off the stage.

But are we not warranted to go a step farther? This symbolical *seizure* and *chaining* of the enemy—is it the effect of mere sovereign power carrying off the field a troublesome foe, out of pity to a Church unable to cope with and cast him out? Is it something done for the Church's *relief*, and altogether without the Church's *instrumentality?* Has the Church, in all time before, "come to the help of *the Lord* against the mighty"; and has the Lord, reversing all his former methods, come now to the help of *the Church* against the mighty? I think not. It is Christ's doing, doubtless; but it is his doing in and by his Church. "The strong man armed long kept his palace, and his goods were in peace; but now, a stronger than he cometh upon him," in his living Church, "*and taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted*, and divideth his spoils." The "dragon is *laid hold on*," in the same sense precisely as "the beast was *taken*," (xix. 20.) THE CHURCH WILL DO BOTH; not only defeating Antichrist, but thereafter, *for a thousand years, never permitting the devil to gain an inch of ground to plant his foot on over the wide world.**

Let the reader now say whether this interpretation does not perfectly correspond with all that we have found to be the undisputed dominion and spiritual glory of the Church in the latter day. If it does, then observe what follows from it. There is in this case *no new revelation made at all*, but only—as the manner of the Apocalypse is known to be—*a*

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* "Do the tares (allowed by Mr. Brown during the millennium) not require one inch of ground to grow upon?" (*Mr. H. Bonar*, p. 46.) If there be any thing in this, Mr. Bonar will have to answer it himself, as he also allows *sin* (which certainly is not *wheat*) during the millennium. But there is nothing in it. I speak of a *public party* espousing error and evil.

concentrated representation of all that is elsewhere said, in a way, and with a charm, quite its own. On the other hand, supposing this *not* to be the true sense of the vision, but that the pre-millennialists are right in holding that it means the total cessation of Satanic influence on the earth, then it is not only a revelation made *here alone*—when, if true, it might have been looked for, and could scarce fail to have dropt in numberless other places—but it is a revelation in direct opposition to the whole teaching of Scripture elsewhere.

SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS.

In case the strong denunciatory criticism of Mr. H. Bonar on the contents of this chapter should lead any reader to think that I have put forth something novel, rash, and dangerous, I add a few paragraphs on the subject, and the rather, as it is one of some interest in itself.

1. As to the extent to which Satan is to be restrained in the latter day, I have expressed only the view of the majority of expositors, in rejecting the notion of a *total cessation* of Satanic influence. Up to the middle of the seventeenth century, nearly all divines thought that this "binding of Satan" began either with the gospel itself, or with Constantine. Did such think that the influence of Satan had totally ceased upon earth, or that any such thing was the sense of this prophecy? Of course not. Then, as to subsequent expositors, who take the fulfilment of the prophecy to be future, I need do no more than name such as *Durham*, *Vitringa*, *Daubuz*, *Lowman*, President *Edwards*, and *Faber*, who, with many others, understand the prophecy as I do, not of an entire cessation of Satanic influence, but relatively to his former permitted power to corrupt, divide, persecute, and waste the kingdom of Christ.

"Two ends," says DURHAM, "or reasons are set down to clear the angel's proceeding: 1. He is bound, 'that he should deceive the nations no more;' that is, kept from having *such* influence to delude the world, as he had done before,* who first made them all heathens and idolaters generally, then after that made them all to worship the beast, and himself in him, so that there was scarce the face of a visible Church. Now, he shall not get *that* liberty *so universally* to delude nations and *eclipse the face* of Christ's Church, as he had done. Nor, 2, ever after that shall he get the world *so generally* to ignorance, superstition, idolatry, and persecution against the godly, *as formerly he had done.* Thus 'deceiving no more' *is not to be understood simply* [absolutely], *but with respect to such extent and success*, and is here added to signify *a new restraint* put upon him beyond what is in his 'casting to the earth,' chap. xii.; where, though he was put from open persecution, yet did he follow, and that not without success, a new way—by deceit, chap. xiii.; but now is he restrained, *in a great measure*, from that also. . . . . . This 'loosing' of Satan out of prison must be in reference to his former binding, *et contra*, that as he was restrained from engaging the nations in *such open and universal hostility* against the Church *as had been*, now his loosing must be the giving of him some link loose, to be able to bring *more* of that about *than during the time of his restraint*, as appeareth in the two verses following: 1. In that 'he went out to deceive,' and more vigorously set about it. 2. In that he did it more successfully than formerly, yet not without a link upon him; SO THAT HIS BINDING IS NOT ABSOLUTE before, more than his loosing is now, *but comparatively*." *

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* If the reader will bear in mind that this Commentary is a posthumous publication, and consists of lectures delivered by the author from week to week to his congregation, in addition to two sermons, his wonder will be, not that an occasional imperfection should occur in the structure of his sentences, as I have left uncorrected here, but that such imperfections are so few. When one thinks of his active labours, and the solid works he prepared for the press, and the early age at which he died (*thirty-six*, 1658), he will probably regard him as a rare light in the Church of God. While preparing these lectures on the Revelation, he set apart a considerable part of one day in every week for prayer, doubtless for light. And I venture to say, that though his views on some points are confessedly unsatisfactory, there is not one commentary on the *whole* book of Revelation of equal age, that any one would put in comparison with it, and hardly one of any age which, for solidity of matter and closeness of reasoning on structural questions, is likely to reward the patient student more, even though inclined to dissent from the author's conclusions. The reader will perhaps excuse this little digression.

"The sense of the emblem," says Vitringa—"of seizing, binding, casting into prison, shutting up and setting a seal upon Satan, that he should deceive the nations no more—is, that Satan, during this time of the thousand years, should be so powerfully and effectually bridled, and by the Divine hand restrained, that he would seem to be confined within the well-secured and closely-shut barriers of the abyss, and there by a mighty power kept prisoner, 'that he might not seduce the nations.' Which what it means, can there be room for doubt? Satan 'seduces the nations' when he inspires them with designs hurtful to the Church of Christ: that is, when he excites in them the love of superstition, idolatry, and false religion, and hatred of the true; and when, under the influence of this base affection, he instigates and drives them on to rage against the Church, the true people of God. For though there are various other kinds of Satanic seductions, *this is the specific kind of* seduction *intended* here, as is clear from this vision (v. 8), and from the parallel visions (chap. xii. 9), and as may easily be gathered from the very word πλανᾷν ('seduce,') which has respect to *religious doctrine* (Matt. xxiv. 5, 11). . . . . . This, then, is the first character of this time: '*Satan bound and imprisoned*'—*not seducing the nations to false religion, and to the persecution of the saints.* During this period there shall be no public persecution of the Church. No new and false religion adverse to that of Christ shall arise; no idolatry or superstition which, in nations instigated by the devil, might lead to the persecution of the Church. If, however, any nations 'in the corners of the earth' (verse 8) should persist in the erroneous views of their ancestors on religion, Satan should not succeed in getting them to undertake the vindication and propagation of that religion of theirs, so as to disturb the peace and happiness of the Church. . . . . When it is said that Satan is to be 'loosed' again at the end of this millennium, it is just as if the prophecy had said, that God would permit Satan again to disturb the state of the Church by a new and last effort." *

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* Expos. of Book of Rev. *ad. loc.*

Let me request the reader's attention to the distinction which Vitringa draws between the *ordinary temptations of Satan*, and those specific *efforts against the Church and cause and truth of God* to which alone this prophecy has respect. Not only did this eminent divine and student of prophecy not hold any total cessation of Satan's influence during the millennium, but he carefully confines the predicted restraint to those specific operations of his which AFFECT THE CHURCH. The same does Durham; and although I am far from denying that there are those who take the restraint to be absolute, I will venture to affirm that, with the exception of pre-millennialists, it is just in proportion to their general acuteness and accuracy as interpreters, that we shall find expositors agreeing with or differing from Vitringa and Durham on this point. Let the reader mark, too, in what way both these interpreters arrive at this sense of the prophecy. They both refer us to the *parallel visions* in this same book, particularly that in chap. xii. 9. Now this is the very ground which I had independently taken. I considered the Apocalypse the best interpreter of itself, and traced its manner of representing the agency of Satan down to the millennial "binding." Who will deny that this is the natural and proper way of settling the point? Yet not a word do I find on this in all that Mr. Bonar has written. He is abundant enough on the symbolic language employed in the passage itself, endeavouring to show that it can mean nothing else than such a local incarceration as is incompatible with the least exercise of power beyond the precincts of his prison. One thing, however, is certain, that the fallen angels are expressly said to be not only "cast down to *hell*," but to be "in chains," there "reserved unto judgment" (2 Peter ii. 4), from which expressions we should certainly *draw the very same conclusion* as Mr. Bonar does regarding the chaining of Satan in the abyss, were we to insist on taking the language *by itself.* But as we know by sad experience how compatible the incarceration and enchainment of Satan in hell is with the exercise of large power among men on the earth, we should be extremely careful not to expound such symbolic language without the aid of other and clearer representations of the same thing, lest we should put upon it a sense which was never intended, not to say a sense directly opposite to the teaching of Scripture in its most naked and unfigurative passages.[*]

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* Anakris. Apocalyps. *ad cap.* xx. 3, 8.

2. A few words now on the *way* in which this restraint on Satan is to be effected. I said, that instead of its being done merely *for* the Church, it would be brought about by the *instrumentality* of the Church itself. This is but an opinion, however, and I have so expressed myself as to make this more evident than in the former edition. At the same time it is an opinion for which I think there are good grounds, though it may or may not be held without affecting one's general view of this millennial vision.

The first thing which guided me to this conclusion was the undoubted sense of the parallel vision in chapter xii. There, as we have already seen, the symbols employed in the vision are afterwards translated into plain speech. There "the war in heaven" turns out to have its battlefield in the high places of the earth; the "fight between Michael and his angels and the dragon and his angels" is just the struggle between the *friends* of each here below (or between themselves *in the persons* of their friends); and the victorious party, which in the vision is "Michael and his angels," is just *the Christians*, or Christ in them—believing men sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb, undaunted in witnessing for Jesus, as became pardoned men, and ready to go as sheep to the slaughter for his name's sake—"THEY overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death." Thus is the devil represented as *cast out* of the Pagan world by the instrumentality of *believing men.*

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[*] Homer represents the cessation of war for thirteen months as a chaining down of *Mars* with strong fetters, in a prison of brass, for that period:

> *Τλῆ μεν Αρης, ὅτε μιν Ωτος κρατερος τ' Εφιαλτης,*
> *Παιδες Αλωῆος, δῆσαν κρατερῷ ενι δεσμῷ.*
> *Χαλκεῳ δ'εν κεραμῳ δεδετο τρισκαιδεκα μηνας.*
>
> —*Il.* E. 385–387.

Similarly Virgil:

> —Diræ ferro et compagibus arctis
> Claudentur Belli portæ; Furor impius intus,
> Sæva sedens super arma, et centum vinctus ahenis
> Post tergum nodis, fremet horridus ore cruento.
>
> —*Æn.* i. 293–296.

Still more to our purpose is the vision of chap. ix., where we find "the key of the bottomless pit" given to *a man*, who *opens* the pit. This man is symbolized by "a star" which was seen to "fall from heaven," that is, as is generally agreed, *an apostate minister.* "To *him* (says the vision) was given the key of the bottomless pit; and *he* opened the bottomless pit." Are we to take these symbols in a *material* and *local* sense? If so, they will be somewhat difficult to manage. But if we take the meaning to be, that this man, "*giving place* to the devil" and proving faithless to Christ, was permitted to act as a great engine of hell over a wide territory, till then nominally Christian, but yielding little fruit unto God—all is clear and consistent. Farther, on the opening of the pit we are told there issued so dense a "smoke" (fumes of *error*), that "the air was darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit." If you take this in a *local* sense, you must suppose that these errors were till then shut up in the abyss while "the *Prince of darkness*" was *not* there, and *not to be* there till the millennium; that they issued forth not under his presiding influence at all; and that they darkened the religious atmosphere simply and solely by the agency of this apostate "star." See what comes of taking these symbols in so *crass* a sense as Mr. H. Bonar would seem to contend for. But if we take them to denote *spiritual truth*, and the sense here to be simply, that hellish error was permitted to overspread a nominally Christian territory through the instrumentality of a fallen minister of Christ, we have a consistent and worthy sense, the sense almost universally put upon the language.* Well, if an apostate minister may *open* the pit and *darken the air* with the smoke of it, may not Christ's faithful servants, acting in his name, do the reverse? May not the Sun of Righteousness arising on the Church, and shedding his warm bright beams of *truth* and *grace* over its obscured territories, chase back the darkness whence it came, and the Prince of darkness himself, shutting the pit upon them both? If it be not too much for men, when "the key is *given* to them," to *open* the pit and *let out* its baleful contents, is it too much for the friends of Him to whom the key is not said to be given, but who is said to "*have* the key of the bottomless pit" (Rev. xx. 1; compare chap. i. 18), in right of conquest, not only to "overcome the dragon by the blood of the Lamb," &c., but to chase him back to the abyss, to *shut in* the tyrant, and keep him close prisoner, thereby merely *undoing*, as instruments of Christ, what the instruments of the devil confessedly *did?*

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* It will be of no avail here to conjure up *Dr. Bush*, and such-like, to show that, by our way of interpreting the symbols, they get rid of a great deal more than we are willing to part with. There are those who can distinguish things that differ; who, in seeking to avoid *Scylla* do not think it necessary to rush into *Charybdis;* who, holding the maxim, *Theologia symbolica non est argumentativa*, neither build doctrinal systems out of symbols, nor reject the truths which are plainly revealed, merely because, over and above the plain revelation of them, they are invested also with pictorial forms.

I may here add, that I have purposely refrained from all *historical* application of the above vision, confining myself to the sense of the *symbols*, which is the same on any historical application of them. I think there is some reason to doubt whether the generally received application is the right one.

What says the Redeemer himself when the seventy returned to him with joy from "healing the sick, casting out devils, and preaching the kingdom of God," as he commanded them. "Lord," said they, "even the devils are subject *unto us* through thy name. And he said unto them, I BEHELD SATAN AS LIGHTNING FALL FROM HEAVEN." (Luke x. 17, 18). Was this a *local* fall? Nay, but a fall *from power.* And was it merely so much of his power as he lost by the brief labours of these seventy disciples that the Redeemer "saw?" No, certainly; it was a prospective view of *the whole conquests of his people* over the enemy "through his name;" and if so, it will not be easy to show that the millennial seizure, binding, and imprisonment of the dragon, are any thing else but one great act of this drama performed by the same parties—"the devils *subject* unto *us* through His name."

But what says the Redeemer again? "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall *come upon him* and *overcome him*, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusteth, and divideth his spoils." (Luke xi. 21, 22.) "How can one enter a strong man's house and spoil his goods, except he first BIND *the strong man*, and then he will spoil his house?" (Matt. xii. 29.) Now every one admits that this "coming upon," "overcoming," and "binding" of Satan, is not properly a struggle between the *persons* of Christ and Satan (whatever may pass between them in the unseen world, of which we know nothing). It is a *conflict of interests* upon earth.* And as it is by the instrumentality of the truth, and of living Christians, that all the triumphs of Christ over Satan are achieved upon earth, and this is styled by the Lord himself the *seizure* and *binding* of Satan, why may not the same symbols, as employed with a little greater fullness by his beloved disciple, signify the same thing? Of course I do not exclude those *providential* restraints which have in every age *concurred* with the truth in the triumphs of the cause of God. So far from excluding these, I think it likely that the whole moral, social, and political arrangements by which, under the overmastering influence of religious principle, the millennial era will be distinguished, will present *one vast breastwork of providential restraints upon evil*, proclaiming to the enemy of souls the utter hopelessness of raising up his fallen kingdom during all that period. All I mean to convey is, that I see no reason to think the restraining power will be put forth *miraculously*, *immediately*, or altogether apart from those instrumentalities which God has, in every previous age, employed in "destroying the works of the devil."

"This binding of Satan," says ANDREAS, one of the earliest commentators, "is the overthrow of the devil, which is accomplished by the power of the Lord's passion: for by this is the strength of Satan bound." †

"The sum of it," says PARÆUS, "is the victory of Christ over Satan, of which it is said, '*Now is the Prince of this world judged;*'

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* Mr. Bonar will here tell me that I am in danger of losing the *personality* both of Christ and Satan, and introducing a conflict of *abstractions*, by such language. But as I believe it to be quite appropriate, so I have no fear of its being misunderstood.

† Quoted by ***Paræus***.

'I saw Satan fall as lightning from Heaven;' 'The Prince of this world shall be cast out.'"*

"The angel," says DURHAM, "hath 'a great chain in his hand.' This showeth . . . . . his subordination to Christ's sovereignty, who effectually restraineth him. . . . . He 'layeth hold on him' by his power, as one in fury and anger—he grippeth him. The party gripped and bound is described just as in chap. xii. to show (1.) that it is the same devil that was cast down to the earth that is *now further bound;* (2.) that we may have some help to knit this story of the serpent to the foregoing story of that same party. He 'bindeth this serpent'—tied him up as it were—and that for a long time, even 'a thousand years.' He 'casteth him into the bottomless pit,' which he feared; *that is, putteth him not only from magistracy*, and *open persecution*, as before (chap. xii.), but also *restraineth him from such underhand dealing as he had before*, and discovereth him and his working *in a considerable degree beyond what was;* and he 'shutteth him up, and sealeth it' (as Dan. vi. and 17), to show the certainty of that restraint and the superiority of the angel [by whom Durham understands Christ] over him, that he shall no more suffer Satan to go by [beyond] his order and march to see [or observe] him, than one shut up in prison can go forth either by violence or subtilty."†

"Nothing, therefore," says MARCKIUS, "is denoted by 'the angel's having a great chain in his hand,' but the all-sufficient power of Christ to bridle Satan, and at his pleasure to keep him in, like a captive whom he suffers not to escape or to stir. *With this power, if you choose to join the word and Spirit of Christ, by which he works, we willingly agree;* and we think this better than introducing here [with Paræus and others] the whole passion of Christ, by which he obtained authority over Satan."‡

I think it worthy of notice, that President EDWARDS—whose excellent "History of the Work of Redemption," when it "comes to show how the success of Christ's redemption will be carried on from the present time till Antichrist is fallen and Satan's visible kingdom on earth is destroyed," is minute, interesting, and scriptural—*takes no notice of the millennial binding and incarceration of Satan*, as a *distinct and separate exercise of Christ's power*, from those other strokes by which his kingdom is to be overthrown.

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* The *historical application* which these authors make of the prophecy is of no consequence: it is their *view of the symbols*, and their recognition of the *instrumentality of the truth*, in the binding of Satan, which I quote them for.—In Apoc. Comment. *ad loc.* 1612.

† Expos. *ad loc.*

‡ In Apoc. Comment. *ad loc.* 1689.

"This," says he, "is a work which will be accomplished *by means*, *by the preaching of the gospel*, *and the use of the ordinary means of grace*, and so shall be *gradually* brought to pass. . . . . The Spirit of God shall be gloriously poured out for the wonderful revival and propagation of religion. . . . . This pouring out of the Spirit of God will not effect the overthrow of Satan's kingdom, till there has first been a violent and mighty opposition made. . . . . Christ and his Church shall, in 'the battle of that great day of God Almighty,' obtain a complete and entire victory over their enemies. . . . . Consequent on this victory, *Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be destroyed.* When Satan is conquered in this last battle, the Church of Christ will have easy work of it. . . . . When the devil was cast out of the Roman Empire, ... it was represented as Satan's being cast out of heaven to the earth (Rev. xii. 9); but it is represented that he shall be cast out of the earth too, and shut up in hell (Rev. xx. 1–3). This is the greatest revolution by far that ever came to pass. . . . . This shall put an end to the Church's suffering state," &c.*

Once more:—

"With respect," says Mr. Faber, "to that binding of Satan which immediately precedes the millennium, it must plainly be considered as a transaction not visible to human eyes. The power of the evil spirit being effectually restrained *through the well-nigh universal prevalence of true religion*, *perhaps also* his seductive influence being specially coerced by the direct, though unseen interference of the Almighty, he is said, by an easy and natural image, to be chained fast," &c.†

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* History of Redemption, Period III., Part 2, Sect. 1.

† Sacred Calendar of Prophecy, vol. iii. p. 468.

Such are the grounds on which I conceive that this millennial "binding of Satan" is not to be viewed as a *miraculous physical removal from the earth* of our spiritual adversary, apart altogether from the ordinary instrumentality by which all previous victories over him have been achieved; but, on the contrary, just *by a more signal forth-putting of all these instrumentalities than has ever yet been witnessed.* And I have added a few extracts that go to show that this conception of the matter is far from being a novelty of my own, as has been represented.

Nevertheless, it may be without sufficient foundation; and I am far from wishing to dogmatise upon it. I leave it for the consideration of those whose familiarity with the symbolic language of prophecy, soundness of judgment, and general accuracy in conceiving of divine things, may enable them to throw further light upon the subject. In sketching the leading features of the millennial period, the practical bearings of this point will come before us in the following chapter, and supersede the necessity of any summary here.

CHAPTER VIII.

LEADING FEATURES OF THE LATTER DAY—ITS CLOSE, AND THE "LITTLE SEASON" TO SUCCEED IT, UP TO THE LORD'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

As each of these topics has received more or less illustration in the foregoing chapters, it is but a brief concluding sketch that I intend here.

The burden of Old Testament prophecy is "THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST AND THE FOLLOWING GLORIES" (τας μετα ταῦτα δοξας, 1 Peter i. 11), or the *glorious results* of these sufferings. Under this comprehensive title may be embraced all the prophetic announcements of Messiah's kingdom, as a kingdom of truth, righteousness, peace, glory. It is seldom lined off into *stages* of advancement; and only in the chronological prophecies have we any thing like distinct *periods* in the new economy, marked eras in Christianity, indicated. Messiah's reign is for the most part held forth as one magnificent *whole;* and though resistance, warfare, corruption, defection, revival, victory, do at times chequer the scene, yet the prevailing aspect in which the kingdom of Christ is hymned in the prophetic Scriptures is its fullest state of development upon earth, losing itself in the superior glories of the celestial and eternal state.

This remark will enable us to correct two opposite mistakes. One class of interpreters see scarcely any thing but the *millennium* in prophecy; another will hardly allow that it is there at all. *Professor Alexander*, for example, in his admirable critical work on the Prophecies of Isaiah, anxious that we should look on all the great evangelical prophecies as a whole, is jealous of the least attempt to connect them with *particular periods* or *specific events* in the economy of grace; while *Fry*, and even *Fraser*, say of almost every prophecy, "The whole of this refers to the millennium." There is a right and a wrong element in both these views. These prophecies undoubtedly announce the kingdom of Christ as a whole; and, as the essential features of that kingdom are never wholly wanting at any period under the gospel, so there is no age at which the fulfilment of these evangelical predictions is not more or less realised, and no Christian who may not himself become a living monument of the truth of them. In this respect, therefore, to say nakedly, and without very careful explanation, that this or that prediction refers wholly to the millennium, is fitted to mislead. At the same time, since it is impossible to deny that the kingdom of Christ is to a great extent held forth *under a degree of expansion and development which it has not yet reached*, but is surely destined to attain; and since this future stage of the kingdom of Christ—this era of Christianity, currently styled the *latter day*—answers to no period in the history of the world but that which in apocalyptic phrase we call the *millennium*, we are not to be restrained from saying that such prophecies, in their full *earthly* sense, point to that wished-for day, and, in the loftiest sense of all, stretch beyond it.

Keeping this remark in view, I proceed to notice the distinguishing features of this period.

1. It will be characterised by the *universal diffusion of revealed truth.*

> "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the [bed, or channel of the] sea." (Isa. xi. 9.)

"A very expressive figure," says Dr. Henderson, "denoting that no portion of the inhabited globe shall be destitute of the true knowledge of God." "As much," says President Edwards, as to say, "as there is no part of the channel or cavity of the sea any where but what is covered with water, so there shall be no part of the world of mankind but what shall be covered with the knowledge of God." What a change from the present state of the world! —the darkness that covers large and densely peopled portions of the earth, and gross darkness the peoples, to fly before the light of revealed truth;—the dark places of the earth to be irradiated by the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and have "light in all their dwellings."

> "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that covereth all peoples, and the web that is woven over all the nations." (Isa. xxv. 7.)

This manifestly contemplates an illumination of the world, which, though in progress of fulfilment ever since the gospel, the rod of Christ's strength, went forth out of Zion, will have its full accomplishment only when the darkness which every where broods over the world is dispersed, and the day-spring from on high shall pour its noontide splendour over this wretched world.

2. It will be marked by the *universal reception of the true religion, and unlimited subjection to the sceptre of Christ.*

> "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Ps. ii. 7.) "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness [probably the wild, untamed, savage tribes] shall bow before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust ["shall be constrained to bow"]. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve

> him." (Ps. lxxii. 8–11; Zech. ix. 10.) "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For THE KINGDOM IS THE LORD'S, and he is the Ruler among the nations. All the fat ones of the earth shall eat and worship:* all they that go down to the dust [every mortal] shall bow before him." (Ps. xxii. 27–29.) "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isa. ii. 2, 3.) "And it shall come to pass, that from one new-moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." (Isa. lxvi. 23.) And the LORD SHALL BE KING OVER ALL THE EARTH: in that day shall there be ONE LORD, and HIS NAME ONE." (Zech. xiv. 9.)

> "Go, make disciples of all nations; baptizing them," &c. (Matt. xxviii. 19.) "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." (Matt. xiii. 31, 32.) "And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE WORLD HATH BECOME OUR LORD'S AND HIS CHRIST'S, AND HE SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER." (Rev. xi. 15.)

What prospects for the world are these! All the polytheism of the Pagan nations, with its cruel, licentious, and degrading rites, and its myriads of "lying vanities," utterly abolished; the Mohammedan imposture, by which millions are held enslaved, brought to an end; the obstinate unbelief of the Jews, with the curse of God upon them, gloriously removed; the soul-destroying errors, blasphemous superstitions, idolatrous rites, and cruel despotism of Popery, which have sat like an incubus upon Christendom for ages, together with all deadly heresies, and professed infidelity, swept away! "ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM," for the whole world! Not that we are warranted to look for a universality of *vital* religion, or the *saving* conversion of all mankind. The reverse is evident from many passages, and will be made manifest enough when the "little season" which follows the millennial period shall arrive. But the outward reception of the truth, and professed subjection to Christ, *will* be universal. "The kingdom of Christ," to use the words of President Edwards, "shall, in the most strict and literal sense, be extended to all nations and the whole earth."

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* The allusion here, and in verse 26, is to the *feast upon the sacrifice* under the law. The sacrifice here is Christ Crucified, and the prediction is, that the greatest upon earth shall enroll themselves members, and celebrate the rites of the Christian Church, professing to derive all they desire to enjoy from Christ.

3. It shall be a time of *universal peace.*

> "He shall judge between (בֵּין) the nations, and decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isa. ii. 4; Mic. iv. 3.)
>
> "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the serpent's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in

> all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."—Isa. xi. 6–9.)

In the first of these passages, the universal *peace* predicted is announced as flowing directly from the universal reception of the *truth.* "God," says Fraser, paraphrasing the verse, "shall set up the government of his grace over the nations: He shall by it correct their fierce passions; so that those who lived in mutual and continual enmity shall mutually embrace, and eagerly promote the blessings of peace." Calvin notices the emphasis that lies in the "*learning* war no more"—not only shall they cease to practise it, but even outlive the use of arms. The second of the above passages is taken in the same general sense by the overwhelming majority of expositors.

"These words," says Prebendary Lowth—"'for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord'—are a proof that the expressions used in the foregoing verses are metaphorical." "What was obviously implied," says Dr. Henderson, "in the preceding description is now expressly stated, and the *cause* of the wonderful change specified—the extension of the knowledge of Jehovah. This latter circumstance further shows that the language of the description is figurative." "The selfish," says Scott, "the penurious, the rapacious, the contentious, the ambitious, the savage, the subtile, and the malicious, would lose their peculiar base dispositions, and become harmless, sincere, peaceable, benevolent and affectionate; they would live together in harmony, hearken to instruction, and be guided by gentle persuasions and entreaties. So that the change would be as evident and surprising, as if the wolf, the tiger, the lion, the bear, and other fierce carnivorous animals, should learn to be gentle and harmless as the lamb, the kid, the calf, or the cow; to associate with them, to graze the pasture as they do, or to feed on hay and straw: and should be so tractable that a little child could lead them," &c. "Vitringa gives," says Professor Alexander, "a specific meaning to each figure in the landscape. . . . . This kind of exposition not only mars the beauty, but obscures the real meaning of the prophecy."*

Before leaving this last passage, let the reader observe the absurdity of taking "God's holy mountain" (Zion) *literally* here. To say that they should "not hurt nor destroy *in all*"—that insignificant elevation called Zion, in the city of Jerusalem, and especially to say that the quiet of this petty rising ground would be owing to "the earth being filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," is so exceedingly puerile, that one can only stand amazed at the tenacious consistency of the literalists in going through with their principle of interpretation in this instance. But if we take "God's holy mountain"—which at that time was the centre of the true religion, the meeting-place of Johovah and his reconciled people, where he "communed with them from above the mercy-seat and from between the cherubim," through the sprinkling of blood—as a familiar and endeared name for *the Church* or kingdom of Messiah, yet to be co-extensive with the earth itself, all is plain. When the knowledge of the Lord shall settle down upon every region, every spot of the earth, as the bed of the ocean is occupied and overspread by its mighty waters,—when it shall work itself into the texture of human society all over the world, universal peace shall come in its train.

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* I commend this remark of Professor Alexander to Mr. H. Bonar. Though he exposes, not without success, some attempts to assign a distinct spiritual idea to each of these figures, he does not thereby overthrow the figurative sense of the prophecy. Calvin and Hengstenberg think there is in the prophecy an *ultimate* reference to the deliverance of a groaning creation from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. "Possibly there is," says Alexander, while Henderson considers it "in the last degree improbable" For myself, observing how the Lord and his apostles stretch their views of the prophecies over the head of all the changing conditions of the earth and of the Church into the final, everlasting state, I should be disposed to say with Professor Alexander, provided it be allowed that the *peaceful character of Messiah's reign* is the direct subject of the prophecy.

4. It will be distinguished by *much spiritual power and glory.*

Under this general expression I include copious effusions of the Spirit, saving conversion on a scale hitherto unparalleled, ecclesiastical unity and peace, spiritual prosperity, shining ordinances, bright tokens of the Lord's presence with his people, as well in their secular as sacred occupations. On this head I refrain from quoting passages, just because every description of the fruit of Christ's sufferings, of the gift of the Spirit, of the conquests of grace, of the Lord's presence with his people, and the light, life, freedom, purity, and joy, resulting from it, will then be realized to an extent before unknown.

Let us suppose what President Edwards describes as the state of the little town of Northampton, in New England, during the *revival* which visited it under his ministry, to spread from town to town, from country to country from continent to continent—place after place catching the blessed gales of the Spirit, and "the spices" of a universal "garden of the Lord" "flowing out."

"Presently upon this," says that distinguished man, "a great and earnest concern about the great things of religion and the eternal world became universal in all parts of the town, and among persons of all degrees and ages; the noise among the dry bones waxed louder and louder: all other talk but about spiritual and eternal things was soon thrown by; all the conversation in all companies, and upon all occasions, was about these things only, unless what was necessary for carrying on their ordinary secular business. They seemed to follow their worldly business more as a part of their duty, than from any disposition they had to it. The only thing in their view was to get the kingdom of heaven, and every one appeared pressing into it: the engagedness of their hearts in this great concern could not be hid; it appeared in their very countenances. The work of conversion was carried on in a most astonishing manner, and increased more and more; souls did, as it were, *come by flocks to Jesus Christ.* From day to day, for many months together, might be seen evident instances of sinners brought out of darkness into marvellous light, and delivered out of a horrible pit and from the miry clay, and set upon a rock, with a new song of praise to God in their mouths. This work of God, as it was carried on, and the number of true saints multiplied, soon made a glorious alteration in the town; so that in the spring and summer following, in the year 1735, THE TOWN SEEMED TO BE FULL OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD: it never was so full of love and joy, and yet so full of distress, as it was then. *There were remarkable tokens of God's presence in almost every house. It was a time of joy in families, on account of salvation being brought to them; parents rejoicing over their children as new-born, and husbands ever their wives, and wives over their husbands.* The goings of God were then seen in his sanctuary; God's day was a delight, and his tabernacles were amiable. Our public assemblies were then beautiful; the congregation was *alive* in God's service. In all companies, on other days, on whatever occasions persons met, Christ was to be heard and SEEN IN THE MIDST OF THEM. Our young people, when they met, were wont to spend the time in talking of the excellency and dying love of Jesus Christ, the gloriousness of the way of salvation, the wonderful, free, and sovereign grace of God, his glorious work in the conversion of a soul, the truth and certainty of the great things of God's word, &c. *Those amongst us that had been formerly converted were greatly enlivened and renewed, with fresh and extraordinary visitations of the Spirit of God.* Strangers were generally surprised to find things so much beyond what they had heard, and were wont to tell others that the state of the town could not be conceived of by those that had not seen it. This seems to have been a very extraordinary dispensation of Providence. God has in many respects gone out of, and much beyond, his usual and ordinary way. The work in this town, and some others about us, has been extraordinary on account of the *universality* of it, affecting all sorts of persons, sober and vicious, high and low, rich and poor, wise and unwise. A loose, careless person could scarcely find another in the whole neighbourhood; and if there was any one that seemed to remain senseless or unconcerned, it would be spoken of as a strange thing."[*]

The worthy author calls this, as he might well do, "a very extraordinary dispensation of providence." But what if it should yet become "a very *ordinary* dispensation of providence?" "God (says he) went in many respects *out of and much beyond* his usual and ordinary way." But if this very thing should become, in the latter day, "his usual and ordinary way," what will his "very extraordinary dispensations of providence" be—those exceedings of his ordinary Self, when he goes, as we have no reason to think but he will go, "out of and much beyond" this? And how else can it well be imagined that those glorious results are to come to pass, which we are taught to look for in such texts as the following: "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in its time."—(Isa lxvi. 8; lx. 22.)

5. *The in-bringing of "all Israel"* will signalise that day.

The Old Testament evidence on this subject has been much controverted, but it is sufficiently evident even from the New. Without quoting those passages which in my judgment imply, though they do not explicitly announce, a general conversion of the natural Israel,[†] I rest on the following passage:

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[*] Narrative of the Revival of Religion in New England, pp. 65–68, 74. Collins' Edit. 1829.

[†] I refer to Matthew xxiii. 39; Luke xxi. 24; Acts i. 6, 7; (iii 19?): 2 Cor. iii. 15, 16.

> Rom. xi. 26–29: "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

In this chapter the apostle teaches that the rejection of God's ancient people under the gospel is to be taken with two limitations: first, that "even at this present time (the period of rejection) there is a remnant according to the election of grace;" and next, that *the people at large*—the bulk and body of the nation—as *contradistinguished from this elect remnant*, shall yet be brought in. In proof of this, the apostle carries us back not only to the prophets—to Isaiah (lix. 20), and Jeremiah (xxxi. 31–34)—but to the Abrahamic covenant itself. "As touching the election (of Abraham and his seed), they are beloved for the fathers' sake"—dear to God because of their ancestral connections, their lineal descent from and oneness in covenant with those "fathers" with whom God originally established his covenant. "For (adds the apostle) the gifts and callings of God (referring to the covenant with Abraham) are without repentance."*

Let the reader but try to realize *what their conversion will*

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* If this perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant, as respects the *natural* seed, be admitted on the authority of the apostle, it will be difficult, I think, to avoid admitting their *territorial restoration;* the PEOPLE and the LAND of Israel being so connected in numerous prophecies of the Old Testament, that whatever *literality* and *perpetuity* are ascribed to the one, must, one would think, on all strict principles of interpretation, be attributed to the other also. Without entering, however, on that question here, I beg to refer to *Lowe's Magazine* for October, November, and December 1847, in which the question is handled at some length.

be as held forth to us in the sure word of prophecy. Take, for example, Zechariah's well-known description of it:

> "*And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications:* AND THEY SHALL LOOK UPON ME WHOM THEY HAVE PIERCED, AND THEY SHALL MOURN FOR HIM, *as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.* IN THAT DAY THERE SHALL BE A FOUNTAIN OPENED TO THE HOUSE OF DAVID AND TO THE INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM FOR SIN AND FOR UNCLEANNESS."—(Zech. xii. 10; xiii. 1.)

The first step in the wondrous process here described is the descent of the Spirit upon them *nationally*, and in his proper relation to Jesus, whom it is his office and delight to "glorify" in the souls of men. And first he comes upon them as a "spirit of *grace*," to which they are "twice dead"—devoid of it, as all are by nature, but over and above this *judicially* graceless, if we may so express it. This will bring them into a convinced, humbled, anxious state—a state of gracious broken-heartedness, prompting them to "confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, and that they have walked contrary to the Lord, and that He also hath walked contrary to them, and hath brought them into the land of their enemies. Their uncircumcised hearts shall thus be humbled, and they shall accept the punishment of their iniquity." But along with this he shall come as a "spirit of *supplications*," leading them "out of the depths to cry unto God" for mercy and light. In this frame, "their heart now turned to the Lord, the vail drops from their eyes" (2 Cor. iii. 14–18), and an object of surpassing glory, yet to them of startling and heart-breaking aspect, stands confessed before their view. It is JESUS. "They look" (by faith) on Him whom they had pierced—pierced as no others had ever pierced him; and discerning now in that bleeding Saviour, under the overpowering teaching and grace of the Spirit, their own very Messiah, their hearts melt within them, their repentings are kindled together, and they mourn for him as one mourneth for an only son, and are in *bitterness* as for a first-born. Once He came to his own, and his own received him not. But "at the *second* time Joseph shall be made known to his brethren; and the house of Pharaoh shall hear the weeping," as one has touchingly said. O what an unexampled mourning will that be! for its *intensity*—"as the mourning of Hadadrimmon;" for its *universality*—"*the land* shall mourn;" for its *individuality* —"all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart." But the most glorious feature of it will be its *evangelical character.* It will be the pure fruit of a believing "*look* upon Him whom they have pierced." As when the Lord turned and *looked upon* Peter, he went out and wept bitterly; so that look on a bleeding Saviour —pierced by their own hands—wounded thus in the house of his friends—will open the sluices of their heart's deepest and purest emotions. Their head will be waters, and their eyes a fountain of tears. And O, when they see that blood which as a nation they murderously shed, turned into a fountain open to themselves for sin and for uncleanness—when they find their robes washed and made white in that very blood of the Lamb—how will they water a free pardon with their tears, how generously will they detest forgiven sin (to use Dr. Owen's words), how will they be disposed to exclaim to their Gentile brethren every where, "Come, hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul!" O for the apostle's spirit of great sorrow and continual heaviness of heart for them, "of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came," and for his glowing expectations of the benefit ourselves as Gentiles would experience from their conversion! And the drops of that spirit are certainly falling upon the churches. But showers are needed. "Upon *the land of my people* shall come up thorns and briars—UNTIL *the Spirit be poured upon us from on high!*" But "I the Lord will hasten it in its time."

6. *The ascendency of truth and righteousness in human affairs* will distinguish that day.

This has been so frequently and fully adverted to in the foregoing chapters, that any thing said on it here would be but repetition. Let it suffice to refer to the following among the multitude of passages which express this:—

> "There was given to the Son of Man dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages, should serve him. . . . . . . Judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. . . . . . And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, should be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." (Dan. vii. 14, 22, 27.) "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads and on their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. . . . They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. (Rev. xx. 4, 6.) "We shall reign on the earth," (chap. v. 10,)[*] "All kings shall

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[*] Nentiquam intelligenda est [hæc pericopa] de tempore Judicium secuturo, cum æternitas læta incœlis tum sit agenda; neque de regno mundano et corporali . . . sed de communis fidelibus omnibus regni spiritualis exercitio in omnium possessione, sui gubernatione juxta Dei legem bello gesto contra hostes cum successu læto, judicio denique deiis; quæ, omnia in hac terrâ obtinent, et obtinebunt illustrius in lætiori quem expectamus Ecclesiæ statu, illustrissime autem in novissimo Christi adventu. (Marckius, ad loc.)

Quæ pericopa necessario intelligenda est de illo statu, quo "judicium fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. . . . . Men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed." (Psalm lxxii. 11, 17.) "The Lord shall be king over all the earth." (Zech. xiv. 9.) "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee* shall perish; yea, those nations shall utterly perish." (Isa. lx. 12.) "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. All the fat ones of the earth shall eat and worship," &c. (Psalm xxii. 27, 29.) "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, *whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.*"—(Psalm xlv. 16.)

By this last prediction I understand the same thing as in Daniel, "the *kingdom* and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom *under the whole heaven*," being "*given to the people of the saints of the Most High.*" In that golden Psalm, the Bride of Christ was exhorted to "forget her own people and her father's house," on her union to "the King," and assured she shall have rich compensation for all the natural delights which she abandons; for she shall have a glorious progeny of *her own*, who shall yet *rule the world.*

"It shall be," says *Edwards*, "a time wherein religion shall

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tradendum erat sanctis" de quo Daniel (vii. 27). . . Præviderunt sancti, et ex Oraculis perspexerunt, aliquando eventurum esse, ut Christiana Religio in orbe *caput extolleret* et suppressis religionibus falsis et superstitiosis, in ipso Romano imperio summam obtineret auctoritatem. Quæ res, si tenuissima Christianismi initia contemplemur, et illorum conditionem temporum, plane videbatur incredibilis, et omni spe major. Sancti tamen, verbo Dei eruditi, magnam hanc rerum catastrophen, quæ tandem effectum sortiri cœpit sub Constantino, præviderunt, et spe sua anticipârunt; et id ipsum vel maxime et hac Revelatione discere cupiverunt. Unde itaque clarissime liquet *scenam cœlestem* quæ hic exhibetur, *exponendam esse de statu Ecclesiæ ut se habet in his terris.*—(VITRINGA, ad loc.)

* That is, *the Church of God*, consisting of the natural Israel under Christ, and the believing Gentiles "grafted into" their "good olive tree;" not to "serve," or refuse to join themselves to it, and conduct all their affairs on its principles, will be their ruin.

in every respect be uppermost in the world. It shall be had in great esteem and honour. The saints have hitherto for the most part been kept under, and wicked men have governed. But now they will be uppermost. The kingdom shall be 'given into the hands of the saints of the most High God' (Dan. vii. 27), and 'they shall reign on earth' (Rev. v. 10). 'They shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years' (Rev. xx. 4). In that day such persons as are eminent for piety and religion shall be chiefly promoted to places of trust and authority. Vital religion shall then take possession of kings' palaces and thrones, and those who are in highest advancement shall be holy men. (Isa. xlix. 23). 'And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.' Kings shall employ all their power and glory and riches for the advancement of the honour and glory of Christ, and the good of his Church: Isa. lx. 16, 'Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings.' And the great men of the world, and the rich merchants, and others who have great wealth and influence, shall devote all to Christ and his Church: Ps. xlv. 12, 'The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.' "*

A prospect this, so different from any thing hitherto seen, that one could gladly expatiate upon it. But I must hasten to notice one other distinguishing feature of the latter day.

7. It will be characterised by great *temporal prosperity.*

Here also it is unnecessary to quote passages. For if "godliness be profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is" as well as "of that which is to come" (1 Tim. iv. 8); if "all these things shall be added unto" those who "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (Matt. vi. 33); if all temporal blessings, in short, are expressly and in numerous prophecies represented as coming in the train of the new covenant blessings—can it for a moment be doubted that when the six foregoing characteristics of the latter day shall be realised this seventh one will find its place? "Then shall the earth yield her increase, and God, even our own God, shall bless us."—(Ps. lxvii. 6.)*

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* History of Redemption, Period 3, Part 2, Sect. 1.

"We need not," says *Fraser*, "have recourse to that miraculous fruitfulness of the earth which Papias feigned, in order to fulfil this prophecy. Plenty is the natural consequence of the moral change which takes place in the world at the millennium. The universal righteousness of that happy period will prevent despotism in government, anarchy in the people, as well as the devastations of war, by which the earth is left uncultivated, or its produce is destroyed. The religion of that period will civilise savages, and destroy among civilised nations the numerous occupations that minister to the lawless passions of men; thus directing a great multitude of the human race to the useful arts of agriculture, who had been formerly idle, and a burden upon the labours of others. The love universally felt and practised in that period, will lead those who have abundance to distribute cheerfully and freely to the necessities of those who may be in need."†

But the sun of this bright day is destined to set—*gradually*, doubtless, as gradually it shall rise. That it will follow the usual laws of spiritual decline, there is every reason to believe. The church of Ephesus seems to have retained for thirty years every external mark of prosperity. "I know thy works"—said Jesus to that church from the skies—"and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and thou hast patience, and hast borne,[*] for my name's sake, and hast not been weary."[†]—(Rev. ii. 2, 3.) What more could have been said to the commendation of a church than this? Nothing, one should think. Yet was there a worm at the root of all: "Nevertheless I have this against thee, that thou hast *left thy first love*" (verse 4). How deep a descent was implied in this, is but too evident from what follows: "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art *fallen*, and *repent*, and *do the first works*" (verse 5). The "works" seem to be all there, but, not done under the promptings of their "first love," they were not "the first works;" and the threatening, "I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick, except thou repent," shows how near they were, amidst all their seeming prosperity, to a fatal decline, when the animating principle of love was at so low an ebb. What then have we to suppose, but that towards the close of the latter day an *Ephesine* spirit shall steal over the Church; her activities in well-doing not sensibly diminished—her universal consistency much as it was—but springing now not so much from the warmth of present affection as from the mechanism of habit, and lingering recollections of the past. The jealous Lord of the Church is now touched, and his Spirit grieved, the withdrawal of whose sensible presence in divine ordinances, and gracious operations in the whole circle of Christian duties, will of course accelerate the decline. "Our Beloved has withdrawn himself and is gone." No more will he "commune with them," as he was wont, "from above the mercy-seat, and from between the cherubim;" for "the glory of the Lord has gone up from the cherub." "The foundation of God, indeed, standeth sure; having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." But "they are not all Israel that are of Israel," even during the millennium; and this will now be sadly seen. Settling upon her lees, her external prosperity proving a snare to her—secularity in the Church takes the place of spirituality, inconsistencies increasingly appear, and her influence for good upon the world at large grows less and less And just as on a small scale, in some little community like that of *Northampton*, as described by Edwards, after the remarkable sense of God's presence over the whole town had begun to wax feeble, the still unconverted portion of it, though subdued and seemingly won over to Christ, would, by little and little, recover themselves, and at length venture forth in their true character—so will it be, in all probability, on a vast scale at the close of the latter day. The unconverted portion of the world—long constrained by the religious influences every where surrounding them to fall in with the spirit of the day, catching apparently its holy impulses, but never coming savingly under its power—this portion of mankind, which we have reason to fear will not be small, will now be freed from these irksome restraints, no longer obliged to breathe an atmosphere uncongenial to their nature, and "feign submission." Now, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"—never slain—will re-assert their claims with an urgency proportioned to the restraints till now placed upon them by victorious spirituality, and with a success proportioned to the diminished power and inclination to resist them. And then will the Lord be provoked to let loose upon them "the roaring lion." Though, of themselves, they have already "*given place* to the devil," yet his every motion is, and ever has been, under higher control. Now, he is at once *morally* and *judicially* free. "The house from whence he went out (or was put out) is empty, swept, and garnished' —unoccupied by his Rival and ready waiting his return.

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* See for example, Isa. xxx. 23, 24; Jer. xxxi. 12; Ezek. xxxiv. 26, 27; xxxvi. 29, 30–38; Amos ix. 13; Zech. viii. 12.—It is of little consequence whether we refer these prophecies to a past time, to a future time, or to no particular time,—considering them as fulfilled *whenever* the spiritual state to which these blessings are *tied* in the prophecies is realised, and just in *proportion* as it is realised. For even on this last view they must have an ample fulfilment in the latter day, because *then* the necessary conditions will be to a very large extent realised.

† Key to the Prophecies, p. 429.

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[*] The best MSS. reverse the order of these verbs.

[†] *κεκοπιακας*, or *εκοπιασας* for *κεκμηκας*.

> "When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison—for a little season—and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven from God, and devoured them." (Rev. xx. 7, 3, 8, 9.)

Many writers seem to think, that the whole of what is here described will be accomplished with such rapidity as not to deserve the name of a *period* in Church history. For this, however, there is no ground, either in the passage itself or in any analogy from past experience. The "*little season*" expressly assigned to these movements plainly shows it to be a distinct period; and as it is mentioned in immediate connexion with the thousand years, and as following directly on it, we must take its "*littleness*," in point of duration, *relatively to that long period.* Were it to extend through one, two, or three centuries, it would still be comparatively "little," if we take the other period for a literal millennium.

> "Since it cannot be imagined," says *Faber*, "that the whole world will plunge at once from piety to impiety, both common sense and general experience may teach us that a considerable time will elapse ere the children of men will become so thoroughly depraved as to enter into a regular combination for the purpose of extirpating the small remnant of God's faithful people."*

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* Sacred Calendar, iii. 478.

Bengel, as I have already stated, takes it to be a period exceeding a

"To deceive the nations" here, does not mean every kind of deception. As he was shut up "that he should deceive the nations *no more till* the thousand years should be fulfilled," and is now loosed and goes forth "to deceive the nations" once more, the deception must be *of the same character* in both cases—to organize a new apostasy, and through them to make a fresh attempt against the Church of God upon earth. So the commentators generally agree.

There is no sufficient reason for taking "the nations that are *in the four quarters* (or corners) *of the earth*" to mean some particular nations at its remote extremities, so to speak. Under this impression, coupled with the mystic names "Gog and Magog," some have given lists of uncivilized nations answering, in their opinion, to the description. The expression is clearly employed to correspond with the figurative description of the Church, as "the *camp* of the saints and the beloved *city*"—"images (says *Scott*) borrowed from the affairs of Israel in the *wilderness* and in *Canaan*."* The Church being represented under this figure, as occupying one central sacred spot—once a reality, but now, under the gospel, only a figure—her enemies are described as sweeping from the ends of the earth towards this spot; and of course, in order to this, Satan is described as going out thither to collect his forces. Thus understood, the expression denotes *the nations universally*, or *over the whole extent of the earth.*†

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century; while *Faber*, in the sentence immediately following that above quoted, reckons it at three hundred and thirty-five years, taking the words, "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five-and-thirty days" (Dan. xii. 12), to refer to the thousand years of the millennium, and the "little season" to succeed it. Some even extend it farther; but where there is no light, as I believe, our wisdom is to be silent.

* See also *Vitringa*, ad loc.

† Compare Job i. 19; Isa. xi. 12; Ezek xliii. 20; xlv. 19; Rev. vii. 1

The names "Gog and Magog" carry us back to the account which Ezekiel gives (xxxviii., xxxix.) of an unprovoked, formidable, but abortive attack on the people of Israel peacefully settled in their own land, by some power or powers called by these same names. Fraser, Faber, and others, take both attacks to relate to the same event; but looking, not only at the passages themselves, but at the usual way in which Old Testament events are referred to in the Apocalypse, we are led, with the majority of commentators, to an opposite conclusion—that the events are in character *analogous*, rather than in fact *the same*.

The object of Satan is very explicitly stated—"to gather them together to battle." *The temptations from which he was restrained* being strictly *of this nature*, he is now loosed just to organise a confederacy against the Church again. By what steps he will proceed, and on what precise questions the quarrel will ostensibly be raised—whether he will set up a *new religion*, or whether, as seems more probable, he will breathe into them an *anti-religious* spirit, that cannot rest so long as God has any open friends, and Christ any witnesses, and the Church exists as a visible body—we cannot tell, and shall in vain attempt to determine. One thing only is certain—he will succeed in raising a mighty party, "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea" (an expression, however, not to be pressed too far; see Gen. xli. 49; Judges vii. 12; and 2 Sam. xvii. 11.) One may wonder at such success; but the past history of the struggles of the serpent's seed against Christ and his people, teaches us to wonder at nothing which he gets liberty to do. The bright latter day has set; the generations that adorned it have died; and other generations have arisen that "know not Joseph." In process of time they may come to deny that matters were ever much better than they are, and laugh at every assertion of the sort. Impatience of the yoke of religion will in all probability come to be the uniting principle and animating motive of this vast party. "No oppression," says Fraser, "is so grievous to an unsanctified heart as that which arises from the purity of Christianity. A desire to shake off this yoke is the true cause of that opposition Christianity has met with from the world in every period, and will, it is most likely, be the chief motive to influence the followers of Gog in his time."*

Their "going up† on the breadth of the earth," denotes their sweeping all before them in their advances against the Church; while their "compassing the camp of the saints and the beloved city," seems to be an allusion to the close investment of Jerusalem by Sennacherib, king of Assyria. The daring and blasphemous assumptions of that heathen monarch and his men of war, their undoubting confidence of success, and their profound and godless security, up to the moment when the angel of the Lord smote the host—will doubtless find their like at this final investment of "the beloved city."

> "As it was in the days of Noe, so it shall be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."—(Luke xvii. 26–30.)
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> "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail

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* Key, *ut supra*, p. 455.

† Grotius notices the *military* character of this phrase, referring to 1 Sam. xi. 1, 1 Kings xx. 1, and Isa. xxxvi. 1, as parallels.

upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."—(1 Thess. v. 2, 3.)

"There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?"—(2 Peter iii. 3, 4.)

"When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"—(Luke xviii. 8.)

And just as faithful Hezekiah and his people, shut in by an enemy sufficient to overwhelm them, could only "lift up their prayer for the remnant that was left," saying, "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy; for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth: incline thine ear, O Lord, and hear; open thine eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God," (Isa. xxxvii. 3, 17)—so will the faithful in this final struggle feel their case utterly hopeless but for some signal interposition from on high. Accordingly, they are represented as "*crying to him day and night*," and because he "bears long with them" (Luke xviii. 7), some will give it up in despair, while the hearts of others will fail them for fear of being left to the will of their enemies.

In these circumstances, of confidence on the one side and fear on the other—when the enemy is saying, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil"—the tremulous cries of the remnant that is left enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. "Shall not God avenge his own elect, that cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you, he will avenge them *speedily*." No manifest sign of interposition, it would seem, will be given. As "*the sun was risen upon the earth* when Lot entered into Zoar," and "*then* the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven" (Gen. xix. 23, 24), so when the last enemy of the Church shall be ready to swallow up the camp of "the saints and the beloved city," then "fire shall come down from God out of heaven, and devour them."

Whether there will be any *interval*, or of what length, between this act of signal vengeance and the Personal Appearing of Christ, we have not sufficient ground to determine. Fraser, Faber, and those who take their views of "Gog," suppose that the "seven months" which Ezekiel speaks of, as spent burying the carcases of these victims of justice, are an indication that "the last day will not quite immediately follow" this judgment. Their grounds, however, are not convincing; and the probability is that this will be the immediate precursor of "the last trumpet." For the final judgment of the devil himself is recorded in the very next verse, and just before the account of the last judgment.

Be this as it may, we are now brought—as far as the light of revelation goes—to the concluding scene. "Corruption," says *Fraser*, "following after the purity and happiness of the millennium, serves to prove fully what had been shown partly before, that unsanctified human nature cannot bear prosperity, because it leads men to resist God's authority, to gratify their own lusts at the expense of violating his laws, and defacing the beauty and order of his creation; that all the ordinary means of grace, that all the common and extraordinary dispensations of Divine providence, which the wisdom of God devised, and his long-suffering patience exercised for the reformation of the human race, are ineffectual to reform the whole, and that the malignant distemper of sin requires a more violent remedy. Accordingly, the world now ripe for destruction, and the Church for eternal salvation, God sets his throne for the last judgment."* "Then," says *Edwards*, "will come the time when all the elect shall be gathered in. That work of conversion which has been carried on from the beginning of the Church, after the fall, through all those ages, shall be carried on no more. There never shall another soul be converted. Every one of those many millions whose names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world, shall be brought in; not one soul shall be lost. And the mystical body of Christ, which has been growing since it first began in the days of Adam, will be complete as to number of parts, having every one of its members. In this respect, the work of redemption will now be finished. And now the end, for which the means of grace have been instituted, shall be obtained All the effect which was intended to be accomplished by them shall now be accomplished. All the great wheels of Providence have gone round—all things are ripe for Christ's coming to judgment."*

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* Key, *ut supra*, pp. 462, 463.

"EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS!"

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* Hist. of Red. *ut supra.*

PART III.

OBJECTIONS.

OBJECTIONS.

A NUMBER of objections to the doctrine of the foregoing passages have already been noticed, and sufficiently replied to in the progress of our argument. Some, however, I have reserved for separate consideration here. And I begin with the strongest of all,—the only one, indeed, which appears to me to have much force.

OBJECTION FIRST:

The coming of Christ is expressly said to be for the destruction of Antichrist; and, as that is confessedly premillennial, so must the coming of Christ be.

The passage on which this argument is founded I shall give in full.

> 2 Thess. ii. 1–8: "We beseech you, brethren, by[*] the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon moved from [the steadiness of] your mind,[†] or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as if the day of Christ were imminent. Let no man deceive you by any means; for [that

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[*] Or "*concerning.*" Several eminent critics seem to question whether ὑπερ is ever used as an adjuration, as in our version. But that it signifies "*for the sake of*," in classical writers, is undoubted (see *ex. gr.* Il. Ω, 466), and it is rendered *per* in the Vulgate, and by Erasmus, Beza, Calvin (though alternatively with *de*), and many others.

[†] σαλευθῆναι απο τ. νοος.

> day shall not come] unless there come the apostasy first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he [as God][*] sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not that, when I was with you, I told you these things. And now ye know what withholdeth that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only [there is] one who hindereth,[†] till he be taken out of the way. And then shall the lawless one[‡] be revealed, *whom the Lord Jesus*[§] *shall destroy with the spirit of his mouth, and shall abolish with the brightness of his coming.*"

On this passage, I can say with the venerable and acute Mr. Faber, that it is "the only apparent evidence for the pre-millennial advent which, after long thought upon the subject, I have been able to discover." In stating the argument, however, from this passage, Mr. Faber does it no justice. He says it lies here, that an advent of Christ being mentioned in both epistles to the Thessalonians, and the advent of the first epistle being confessedly his second personal advent, the advent of the second epistle, to destroy the Man of Sin, must needs be the same second advent. This is hardly a fair statement of the argument; nor is his answer to it more satisfactory. He thinks the Thessalonians had been "led to imagine that the advent of Christ to destroy the little horn, or the Man of Sin, so graphically described by Daniel, was close at hand;"[‖] and that it is this mistake which the apostle corrects in the passage before us. Now, for my part, I see no ground to think the Thessalonians were troubled about the Man of Sin at all. To me it seems manifest that the time of Christ's second personal advent was what excited and unsettled the Thessalonians; and that the apostle brings in the apostasy and the Man of Sin *quite incidentally*, to show how mistaken was the notion that all things were already ripe for Christ's second coming. In this view of the passage, then, the argument for the pre-millennial advent from it will stand thus:—Here is a passage in which the express subject of discourse is the second "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him," (v. 1); to guard against the notion that this "day of Christ" (his personal coming) was "at hand" or "imminent." (v. 2), we are informed that a great apostasy would have to be consummated in the Christian Church, and the Man of Sin to be revealed ere Christ come (v. 3–8); and therefore, when the apostle adds, of this anti-christian power, "whom the Lord shall destroy with the spirit of his mouth, and shall abolish with the brightness of *his coming*," is it not most natural to take this "coming" to destroy the Man of Sin to be the same personal coming of which the apostle was discoursing, and that having told them *before what events* Christ could *not* come, he now tells them for what purpose he *would* come, namely, to destroy Antichrist, and consequently before the millennium?

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[*] *ὡς ϑεον*, omitted by nearly all modern editors.

[†] *μονον ὁ κατεχῶν αρτι ἕως, κ. τ. λ.*

[‡] *ὁ ανομος.*

[§] *Ιησους* added by the modern editors.

[‖] Sacred Calendar, iii. 437.

I think I have put this argument fairly, and with all its force. Let us now endeavour to weigh it dispassionately.

1. There can be no doubt, that the whole passage admits of a consistent and good explanation on the view of it above given. Nor is this view confined to pre-millennialists. Those of our elder divines who looked upon the millennium as past already, and considered the destruction of Antichrist as the immediate precursor of the eternal state, understood this "coming of the Lord" to destroy Antichrist, of his second personal advent. There are other opponents of the

pre-millennial theory, who explain this coming to destroy the Man of Sin, of Christ's second coming. They make "the apostasy," "the Man of Sin," "the lawless one" here spoken of, to embrace *all the evil, apostasy, and opposition to Christ*, which are to exist till the consummation of all things; in which case, the destruction of it will of course not be till the second advent. In neither of these views, however, can I concur. As I do not believe that the millennium is past already, I do not think the destruction of Antichrist will be immediately followed by the eternal state. And as I think it manifest that the apostle is describing, not apostasy *in general*, and all the opposition to Christ which is to arise in the world, but a *specific apostasy*, out of which was to spring a *specific enemy* of Christ and his Church, I am constrained, by all the laws of exact interpretation, to apply the destruction here predicted to *that specific enemy* so minutely described, and the "coming of the Lord" here announced—whether personal or figurative—to a *pre-millennial* coming. But,

2. It is beyond all reasonable dispute, that the *temporal* judgment of any wicked community—whether political or ecclesiastical—*by the agency of second causes*, is in prophetic language described as "*the coming of the Lord*," and "*the day of judgment*" to that community. Thus was Isaiah to foretell the destruction of *Babylon* by the instrumentality of the *Medes and Persians?* This is the strain of his language:

> "*The day of the Lord is at hand;* it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. . . . . . *Behold the day of the Lord cometh*, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate, and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For *the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. . . . I will shake*

> *the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place*, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. . . . . And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah."—(Isa. xiii. 6, 9, 10, 13, 19.)

Similar language is used with respect to *Egypt:*

> "*Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt;* and the idols of Egypt shall be moved *at his presence*, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it."—(Isa. xix. 1.)

So of *Assyria:*

> "*Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger*, and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire: and his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck.* . . . . And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his glorious arm, with the indignation of his anger, and the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones. . . . . For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, shall kindle it."—(Isa. xxx. 27. 28, 30, 33.)

So of *Jerusalem*, through the instrumentality of the *Chaldeans:*

> "*Behold, the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains*

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* Compare chap. xi. 4: "He (Messiah) shall smite the earth with the *rod of his mouth*, and with *the breath of his lips* shall he slay the wicked person." These are the words which the apostle employs in the passage before us—"Whom the Lord Jesus shall destroy *with the spirit of his mouth*, and abolish with the brightness of his coming."

> *shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire,* and as waters that are poured down a steep place. For the transgression of Jacob is all this," &c.—(Mic. i. 3–5.)

So of *Jerusalem*, through the instrumentality of the *Romans :*

> "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before THE GREAT AND THE TERRIBLE DAY OF THE *Lord* come." (Joel ii. 30, 31; compare Acts ii. 16, 19, 20.) "Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, TILL THE SON OF MAN BE COME."—(Matt. x. 23.)

So, in a word, of the *Church of Sardis :*

> "If therefore thou shalt not watch, *I will come on thee as a thief,* and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."—(Rev. iii. 3.)

It will be of no avail to allege that some or all of these passages point *ultimately* to the personal advent of Christ, and that Babylon, Egypt, Jerusalem, Sardis, are in that case to be viewed as typical of powers and parties then existing. It is enough if it be admitted (and who can dispute it?) that "the Lord" is in all these passages represented as "coming" for the destruction of the communities just mentioned, and that in those cases the coming could only be *figurative.* From these examples it is evident, that a *figurative coming of the Lord* for such purposes was quite familiar in prophetic phraseology; that the mere occurrence of such language in a prophecy would not necessarily suggest to any one well versed in its language, the personal advent of Christ, but rather the reverse; that, as the apostle Paul was profoundly read in the Scriptures, and deeply imbued with their spirit and style, it cannot be thought strange that he should fall in with it in this respect, by speaking of *a bright coming of Christ to destroy the anti-christian power*, meaning a *figurative advent*, and not his second personal coming. This being the case—since such a sense of the apostle's phraseology, *taken by itself*, is perfectly familiar in prophetic language—the only question is, Does the whole passage forbid such a sense? is there any thing in the subject and context to make such a sense harsh and unnatural? If so, I for one would not adopt it. For in most cases, the scope of an author is a far better clue to his meaning than any criticism on particular words. Let us try the passage, then, by this test.

The precise object of the apostle, be it observed, was not to tell the Thessalonians *when* or even *in connexion with what events Christ would come.* His one object is expressed by himself as plainly as possible, namely, to dissipate the notion "*that the day of Christ was at hand*," or "*imminent.*" This object is sufficiently gained by the announcement of an apostasy yet to be consummated, and the Man of Sin yet to be revealed in the Christian Church. By this they would be taught that matters were very far from being ripe for the immediate coming of Christ. But our apostle is not accustomed to dismiss great topics, even though only incidentally noticed, with the topic which occasioned the mention of them; and often the digression occupies more space than the subject which drew it forth. So it is here. The subject is the second coming of Christ; the digression relates to the apostacy and the Man of Sin. Having disposed of the *primary* subject, he expatiates on the *incidental* one, going into very interesting details regarding the anti-christian character and blasphemous pretensions of this ecclesiastical power; the preparations already in being for his manifestation; the unnamed obstacle still existing to his formal development, and the revelation, on the removal of this obstacle, of the dreaded enemy, destined nevertheless to perish by the spirit of the Lord's mouth, and the brightness of his coming; his Satanic origin and diabolical arts for decoying men; the mischief he was to be permitted to work; the causes of his success, and the class of persons whom he would find prepared to swallow his lies to their souls' destruction. These details extend over *ten verses*, while the intimation of the destruction of this power by the brightness of the Lord's coming occupies *the half of one verse in the very centre of these* details, and is introduced quite parenthetically, even *in the middle of a sentence*—the detail being continued through four subsequent verses.

Looking at the whole passage in this light, I can see nothing requiring us to take this incidental "brightness of his coming" to be the same with that personal "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering unto him," the error about which had been already corrected. I do not say it *cannot* be. All I say is, I see nothing which imperatively *requires* us so to understand it. In answer to the question, Which is the more probable sense of the phrase, "brightness of his coming," *here?* I answer by reminding the reader how all great judicial visitations—all inflictions of public vengeance on a great scale, whether on political or ecclesiastical bodies—are described *in language drawn from the final and personal coming of the Lord to judgment*, and how, for the judgment of *Antichrist* especially, the Lord is uniformly represented as "coming" in the awful pomp of retributive justice—with all the solemnities in which he will ever appear at the great day—which day, however, we have seen that it is not; and then asking the reader whether Paul, familiar with such language, and copying not only the *general style* but *the precise phraseology* of the prophets, when describing the Man of Sin's destruction in the very language in which his doom had been written already to his hand, *is not to be interpreted according to the uniform sense of Scripture prophecy, on the subject of which he professedly treats?*

3. What is here ascribed to "the brightness of Christ's coming," is in Daniel ascribed to *the Church itself*, as the instrument of Antichrist's destruction.* A careful attention to this fact will show the extreme improbability of the "coming" here being Christ's second personal advent.

4. When the Socinians quote with an air of triumph such passages as these, "My Father is greater than I"—(John xiv. 28); "Then shall the Son also himself be subject to Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 28)—in proof of the personal inferiority of the Son, it would be uncandid to deny that these and like passages, *taken by themselves, and without the light thrown upon them by other portions of revelation*, do seem to teach this inferiority; and that, when we nevertheless assert the absolute personal *equality* of the Son to the Father, we seem to violate the natural sense of those passages. It is only by a careful comparison of Scripture with Scripture, that the perfect consistency of such statements with the supreme deity of Christ is made to appear.

In like manner, though it would be uncandid to deny that "the brightness of Christ's coming," to destroy Antichrist, may explain perfectly well of his second personal coming, and that if we take this passage *by itself, and without the light thrown on it by other portions of Scripture*, that does seem to be the coming intended; I have no hesitation in affiming, that if we will but deal with this passage as we do with those which seem to favour the Socinian scheme, we shall soon be convinced that the second personal advent is *not* the coming of Christ here intended.[*]

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* See Part II. chapter iii., particularly pp. 352–354.

OBJECTION SECOND:

The coming of the Lord announced in the following passage can be no other than his personal coming; and as the time of this coming is when "the times of the Gentiles have been fulfilled," that is, at the fall of Antichrist and immediately before the millenium, it follows that this is the time of the second advent.[†]

> Matt. xxiv. 29–31: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one

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[*] Some insist that the "coming" here must be personal, because the word (παρουσια) rendered "coming," is never used but of a *personal* coming.[*] Were I disposed to trust to such materials, I might argue the opposite of this from the very next verse, where the same word is employed to denote the "*coming* of the Man of Sin"—certainly not an individual *person*, but a wicked, apostate, anti-christian *system* or *power* (of which it were absurd to regard *the Pope* as any more than the nominal head—a head, too, which has often been a-wanting whilst the life of the system has been entire). But what matters it either way? It is admitted that the Lord is said to "come" figuratively in many places of Scripture; and if so, since the figure—to be a good one—must be taken from his *personal* coming, of course any word expressive of a personal coming must, just on that account, be suitable for expressing his figurative coming.

[†] It is unnecessary to give references here, as every defence of the premillennial theory contains this argument.

[*] Brooks, Elem. pp. 185–177. Wood, Affirm. Answ. p. 63.

> end of heaven to the other." (Compare Luke xxi. 24–27.)

That these words point *ultimately* to the personal advent of Christ and the final judgment, I have not the least doubt. Nor do I question that when, "the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled," they will receive an accomplishment. To both these I will speak by and by. But the first question ought to be, What is the *direct* and *primary* sense of the prophecy? Those who have not directed their attention to prophetic language will be startled if I answer, The coming of the Lord here announced is his *coming in judgment against Jerusalem*—to destroy itself and its temple, and with them the peculiar standing and privileges of the Jews as the visible Church of God, and set up "the kingdom of heaven" (or gospel kingdom) in a manner more palpable and free than could be done while Jerusalem was yet standing. I say this application of the words, as their direct and primary sense, will probably startle those unacquainted with the prophetic style. But all hesitation on the subject will cease if we will but allow the Scripture to be its own interpreter. And,

1. Our Lord decides the sense of his own words, when he says of this entire prophecy, almost immediately after the words quoted, "Verily I say unto you, THIS GENERATION SHALL NOT PASS TILL ALL THESE THINGS BE FULFILLED."—(Matt. xxiv. 34.) Does not this tell us as plainly as words could do it, that the whole prophecy was meant to apply to the destruction of Jerusalem? There is but one way of setting this aside, but how forced it is, must, I think, appear to every unbiased mind. It is by translating, not "this *generation*" (ἡ γενεα αὕτη), but "this *nation* shall not pass away;" in other words, the Jewish nation shall survive all the things here predicted!

Nothing but some fancied necessity, arising out of their view of the prophecy, could have led so many sensible men to put this gloss upon our Lord's words. Only try the effect of it upon the perfectly parallel announcement in the previous chapter: "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. . . . Wherefore, behold, I send you prophets and wise men and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city: *that upon you* may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. *Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.*" (επ την γενεαν ταυτην· Matt. xxiii. 32, 34–36). Does not the Lord here mean *the then existing generation of the Israelites?* Beyond all question he does; and if so, what can be plainer than that this is his meaning in the passage before us?* In this case, the coming of the Lord here announced is just his figurative coming to "judge" and destroy Jerusalem, with all the judicial consequences of that coming.

2. Language equally strong with that of this prophecy is not only used in a *figurative* sense, and in a great variety of cases—showing that the figurative sense is a fixed and recognized sense in prophetic style—but it is expressly applied to this very event of the destruction of Jerusalem, where we have inspired authority for so understanding it.

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* It is not enough to argue, as Mr. Faber does, that the *primary* meaning of the word is "*nation*," and that the sense put upon it by our translators is but the secondary sense; for many words are used chiefly in their secondary sense. His examples of New Testament usage are, I think, against his own conclusion; and if the Greek Concordance be consulted, the usage will be thought rather the other way. But, setting aside such criticism, the one question, I conceive, is, Can the word be rendered "nation" *here*, without putting a forced, not to say foolish sense upon the whole statement? I think not.

I have already shown that the judgments of the Lord on Babylon, Egypt, Jerusalem, at the time of the captivity, and the Sardian church, are announced in language quite as strong as that of the passage before us. I here add one other example:—

> Rev. vi. 12–17: "And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains: and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and HIDE US FROM THE FACE OF HIM THAT SITTETH ON THE THRONE, AND FROM THE WRATH OF THE LAMB: FOR THE GREAT DAY OF HIS WRATH IS COME; AND WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO STAND?"

Who that is ignorant of the prophetic style would not be startled to learn that the personal advent of Christ, and the last judgment, is *not* the primary and proper subject of this sublime prophecy, and that the *fall of Paganism* in the fourth century of the Christian era, is the historical event here symbolically announced? Yet the great majority of commentators, including some of the staunchest pre-millennialists, so expound this prophecy. I am not here contending that this *is* the event predicted. All I say is, that, strong as the language is—as strong as that of the prophecy we are examining—some of the ablest and most judicious commentators understand by it a *figurative* coming of Christ, and a figurative "day of wrath" against the Pagan world.*

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* *Ex. Gr.*, Durham, Vitringa, More, Daubuz, Lowman, Newton (Bp.), Faber, Elliott. "The general intent of this vision," says *Mr.*

All the commentators I refer to admit that this and similar *comings to judgment* are but preludes to the personal advent and the personal judgment; and such, I freely admit, is the prophecy before us. But I think it must now be allowed, that if it can be shown that our Lord meant nothing else *primarily* or *immediately* but *the judicial overthrow of Jerusalem*, there is nothing in the mere *grandeur and strength* of his language to prevent us taking that view of it. Now I have shown, from our Lord's own solemn declaration, that the generation then existing were to witness the fulfilment of the whole; and I have only now further to show that in other prophecies, which we have inspired authority for applying to the destruction of Jerusalem, the same prophetic style is employed as in this prophecy.

> "And it shall come afterwards," says Joel—or "in the last days," as Peter renders the phrase—"that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh . . . . . . And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into

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Elliott, for example, "does not seem to me to have been difficult to understand. It surely betokened some sudden and extraordinary *revolution in the Roman empire*, which would follow chronologically after the æra of martyrdoms depicted under the seal preceding—a revolution arising from the triumph of the *Christian cause* over its enemies, and in degree universal." After quoting, as illustrations of such symbolic phraseology, several of the passages which I gave under the former Objection, and some others, he adds, "In which passages, it will be well, I think, to observe what is said of the *presence of the Lord as manifested*, though acting by *human agency;* and again, of the *day of the Lord and his fierce anger* being shown in the subversion of the former political government, &c. . . . All which being put together, there will not, I believe, remain a *single symbolic phrase in this prophecy* of the sixth seal unillustrated, or —with the interpretation *referring it to a political revolution* such as has been given—*unconfirmed* by similar figures in other prophecies, to which the scriptural context has itself already furnished a similar interpretation." (*Hor. Apoc. ut supra*, i. pp. 208, 217, 218.)

> darkness, and the moon into blood, before THE GREAT AND THE TERRIBLE DAY OF THE LORD COME. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered." &c.—(Joel ii. 28–32.)

The apostle Peter, quoting the whole of this passage, expressly declares that the *first* and the *last* parts of it were fulfilled at the Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit, and the conversions immediately following it. Evident therefore it is, that the "*great and terrible day of the Lord*"—bound up with these events as part of one and the same great chapter of church history—is no other, according to inspiration itself, than *the day of Jerusalem's judicial destruction.**

Again,

> "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. BUT WHO MAY ABIDE THE DAY OF HIS COMING? AND WHO SHALL STAND WHEN HE APPEARETH? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap," &c. (Mal. iii. 1, 2.)

> "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet *before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:* and he shall turn

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* "In connection," says *Dr. Henderson*, "with this period of the rich enjoyment of divine influence, Joel introduces one of awful judgment, called as usual, יוֹם יְהוָֹה, *the day of* Jehovah, the precursors of which he describes in very alarming language. That the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish polity is intended, most interpreters are agreed. . . . . To render more prominent the tremendous nature of the final judgment of the Jews, when their city and polity were destroyed, it is not merely called יוֹם יְהוָֹה but יוֹם יְהוָֹה הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא, *the great and fearful day of Jehovah*—terms which are employed by the prophet Malachi, iv. 5 (Hebrew—iii. 23) in reference to the same event." (On the Minor Prophets, *ad loc.*)

the heart of the fathers to the children," &c.—(Chap. iv 5, 6.)

Taking the questions contained in the first of these passages *by themselves*, who would ever doubt that they refer to the *second* coming of Christ and the *last judgment?* And yet it is absolutely certain that they do not. He whom Messiah calls in this prophecy, "my messenger"—afterwards called "Elijah the prophet"—is so expressly declared to be John the Baptist, both by the angel who announced his birth (Luke i. 17), and by our Lord himself once and again (Matt. xi. 13, 14; xvii. 10–13), that no doubt of this being the right application of the words can remain on the mind of any who bow to such authority.* Of course, in that case, "the great and dreadful day of the Lord" can be no other than what Joel describes in identical terms—the day of Jerusalem's judicial destruction. When it is said, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple—but who may abide the day of his coming?" the prophet refers indeed to Christ's *first* coming, but stretches it onwards till after his ascension, and the awful *reckoning* which he made with the Jewish nation and Church for rejecting him, by the destruction of their whole state through the instrumentality of the Romans.

I might add the following: "Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till THE SON OF

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* "Upon the circumstance that our Lord uses the future tense (*ερχεται*) *shall come*, some Christian interpreters have attempted to establish the hypothesis, that the prophecy is still to be fulfilled before his second advent; but he is obviously speaking in the style of language employed by the prophet, to whom the event was future, and in adaptation to the opinion of the scribes, though he immediately corrects what was erroneous in their notion, declaring that the event was no longer future, but had actually taken place in the person and ministry of John. It is truly surprising that any one should still persist in giving to the prophecy an aspect still future, in the very face of an exposition at once positive and infallible."—(*Henderson*, Min. Proph. *ad loc.*)

MAN BE COME" (Matt. x. 23)—which Mr. Birks actually stretches out to the second advent! (p. 332.)* "Verily I say unto you, *There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they* SEE THE SON OF MAN COMING *in his kingdom*" (Matt. xvi. 28); or as Mark expresses this coming of the Son of man, "till they have seen *the kingdom of God come with power*" (Mark ix. 1); or more simply still, according to Luke, "till they *see the kingdom of God*" (Luke ix. 27.)†

We have thus seen that a figurative advent of the Lord to the judgment of any wicked community, is a familiar idea in prophetic style; and that this very event, of the destruction of Jerusalem, is so described in several prophecies, for the application of which we have inspired authority: so that when our Lord assures us that that coming of his, and the judgments announced by him, would be witnessed by the generation then living, we are prepared by Scripture itself to acquiesce in this as just one of the many examples of a *figurative advent of Christ to judgment*, expressed in all the grandeur usually employed to describe his *personal advent and the final judgment.* ‡

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* Se venturum Christus promittit, priusquam totam Judæam peragraverint: nempe quia per Spiritus sui potentiam regnum suum illustrabit, ut vere apostolis affulgeat gloria illa et majestas, quæ adhuc eos latebat. (CALV. *ad loc.*)

† The plain meaning of this announcement, in all its varying forms, is, that the establishment of "the kingdom"—sometimes called "the kingdom of God," sometimes "the kingdom of heaven," but meaning the Gospel kingdom—would be witnessed by those of his auditors who should survive the overthrow of Jerusalem—at that time the chief obstacle to its manifestation. The connexion between this coming and the personal advent, mentioned in immediate connexion with it (Matt. xvi. 27), will be presently adverted to. But compare what is said of the *spiritual* and *bodily* resurrections in John v. 24-29.

‡ "Many attempts," says *Dr. Urwick*, "have been made to anatomize this prophecy, and exhibit separately the parts which relate to the inva-

On this prophetic phraseology, no one has written with such clearness and force as *Mr. Faber.* The following passage is well worthy of the reader's attention :—

"The judicial punishment or destruction of a nation is to *that* nation the day of judgment, or the great day of the Lord's controversy, or the day of the Lord's judicial advent: for in the very nature of things, to no other judgment can a nation, *as* a nation, be subjected. This circumstance has introduced a system of very peculiar phraseology into the writings of the Hebrew prophets. Wicked *nations* have their day of judgment in this world; when, in their national capacity, they are arraigned, and convicted, and temporally punished. Wicked *individuals* have their day of judgment *at the end of* this world; when Christ, at the time of his second advent to judge both the quick and the dead, will finally pronounce upon each person his irrevocable sentence of happiness or of misery. The similarity of these two judgments, in regard to *principle*, could not be overlooked. hence, in a mode of composition which specially affects hieroglyphical grandiloquence, we shall not wonder to find that all the solemnities of the future *literal* day of judgment, such as the second advent of the Messiah, the erection of his dread tribunal, his awful session as an universal Judge, his infliction of punishment upon the impious, and his award of retribution to the pious, should be employed, symbolically, to represent the *tempo-*

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sion of Jerusalem by Titus, and the parts which regard the judgment of the world at the last day. I have not met with any thing satisfactory in this way. If any man could have done it well, Bishop Horsley was the man: he had learning, ingenuity, power, and determination enough for it. Yet one cannot read the sermon in which he attempts to separate the prophecy of the 'coming' from the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, without feeling that a giant is grappling with a difficulty he cannot master. The statement of our Lord, 'Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till these things be fulfilled,' puts it, I think, beyond question, that the whole range of the prediction was to have *an* accomplishment before the then race of human beings should all have died from the face of the earth." (Second Advent, p. 5, note.)

ral judgment of a wicked nation, and the *temporal* deliverance of God's faithful people, on this present sublunary globe. In short, the literal future judgment both of the quick and of the dead, and the literal second advent of Christ with the clouds of heaven, are poetically, though appropriately, used as a type, or symbol, or hieroglyphic, of *any* eminent judgment inflicted here below upon *any* impious nation or community, through the instrumentality of those secondary causes which God may be pleased to call into effective action."*

On the distinction here so clearly drawn between *public bodies* or *communities*—whether *civil* or *ecclesiastical*—and *individual persons*, Mr. Faber deduces the following canon for determining whether the *advent* and *judgment* announced in any prophecy is to be understood *literally* or *figuratively.*

"When the judgment of some distinctly specified, or plainly insinuated, wicked empire or community is described, as being effected by the coming of the great day of retribution, and by the advent of the Lord with the clouds of heaven, then the temporal judgment of that particular empire or community is alone intended, and the language in which it is set forth must be understood *figuratively*, not *literally*. But when the judgment of no distinctly specified, or plainly insinuated empire or community is thus described, then the coming of the great day of retribution, and the advent of the Lord with the clouds of heaven—being mentioned generally with reference to the whole world, and not particularly with reference to some special body politic—must be understood *literally*, not *figuratively*." †

This canon, founded upon a distinction which pervades the whole language of Scripture, will commend itself, I believe, to the judgment of every dispassionate student of the Bible, in proportion as it is closely tested.

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* Sacred Calendar, i. 225–227.

† Sac. Ca iii. 466.

OBJECTION THIRD:

" A full and distinct narrative of the Lord's appearing from heaven is detailed by the prophet [in the Apocalypse] just *before* the millennium, and forms its immediate introduction. (Rev. xix. 10.) On the other hand, *after* the millennium there is not found one syllable in the prophecy expressive of such an advent. The testimony of this fundamental vision [to the pre-millennial advent] is decisive and complete."*

> "It may be affirmed, no doubt," adds the acute author just quoted, "that the advent in chap. xix. is figurative only, and that a real advent occurs after the millennium, when Satan has been loosed, and the fire descends from heaven. But the stubborn fact remains unaltered, that the vision expressly reveals an advent in the former place, and in the latter passes it by in silence. To maintain the theory, we have to commit a double violence: we have to explain away the advent where it appears openly and in plain terms, in the prophecy; and we have to introduce it where the Holy Spirit gives no token of its occurrence. It is difficult to see how any interpretation could be censured with more justice as both adding to and taking away from the words of the prophecy. Let any Christian read the two chapters in question (Rev. xix. xx.), laying aside every previous notion, and with a simple desire to hear the voice of God's Spirit, and I see not how he can escape from the evident conclusion. The second advent of our Lord, as described in the latest prophecy of Scripture, does not *follow*, but *precedes*, the millennial kingdom."

This is strong language certainly, and it will be admitted that the objection is put as forcibly as possible. Let us examine it then.

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* Birks' Four Prophetic Empires, *ut supra*, pp. 329, 330.

What is this "full and distinct narrative of the Lord's appearing from heaven," which is "*detailed*" in Rev. xix.? It is as follows:

> "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. . . . And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."—(Rev. xix. 11–16, 19–21.)

Truly there is "detail" here; but this is the very thing which shows it *not* to be the personal coming of Christ. For where, let me ask, is there *one* undisputed, unequivocal announcement of Christ's second personal coming in which such details occur, or *any details at all?* All we read is just the *fact* of his coming. And no wonder; for as it will be *sudden*, so it will be *instantaneous* and *universally visible.* "The Son of Man *shall come* in the glory of his Father with his angels;" "To them that look for him *shall he appear*, without sin, unto salvation;" "He *shall come* to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe;" "Looking for the blessed hope, and the *glorious appearing* of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" "When Christ, who is our life, *shall appear*, then shall ye also," &c.; and even in the Apocalypse itself, "Behold, he *cometh* with clouds, and every eye shall see him," &c.

Is there aught of "detail" here? Why, the absence of all detail is just the most sublime feature of each of these announcements of Christ's second coming. Only think how it would do to prefix to any one of them what Mr. Birks says of Rev. xix. 11, &c.—"A full and distinct *narrative* of the Lord's appearing is here *detailed* by the prophet." The incongruity is apparent. I draw, therefore, just the opposite inference from Mr. Birks. The *narrative* and *detailed* character of this vision convinces him it is a vision of the second advent; and that is just the thing that convinces me it is *not* the second advent.

But further, what can you possibly make of this as a vision of the second advent? Will Christ personally and visibly fight against "the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies," personally and visibly gathered together against him? "We know (says *Mr. Gipps*,) the overwhelming effects produced by the manifestation of Christ's glory, or of portions as it were of that glory, upon those who beheld such manifestation, some of whom were his own saints, such as in Dan. x. 6–9; and at his transfiguration, Mark ix. 6, Luke ix. 32–34. We are informed of the appearance of *one* of his angels at his resurrection, and of its effect upon the guard of Roman soldiers (Matt. xxviii. 3, 4); of the effect of his appearance to Paul and his companions (Acts ix. 3–7, xxii. 9–11); and lastly, of his appearance to John himself (Rev. i. 17), the glory of which was so overwhelming to him, although he was the beloved disciple, and leaned upon Jesus' breast when manifest in his humiliation as man, that John *fell at his feet as dead.* Can we, I would ask, when we read these accounts, conceive, that when Jesus comes in person in his own glory, and that of his Father, with all his holy angels, any created being, any worm of the earth, any sinful child of man, will either dare or be able to make war against him in his person? The very absurdity involved in this idea would of itself prove to my mind that the event foretold in chap. xix. 11, &c., cannot be the second or any personal coming of Christ."*

But it may be said, if this be not the second advent, where does it occur in the Apocalypse *after this?* "After the millennium (says Mr. Birks) there is not found one syllable in the prophecy expressive of *such* an advent." True, for this is symbolical and figurative; and it would be somewhat difficult to conceive how the personal descent of Christ from heaven to earth could be symbolically represented. But when I read thus, "And I saw [*after* the millennium] a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face (or *presence*, προσωπου) the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them," and connect this with Peter's announcement, "*The day of the Lord* will come as a thief, *in the which* the heavens shall pass away, and the earth and its works be burnt up," (2 Pet. iii. 10), I see the Lord personally present in the one passage, while the other informs me he has *only then* come. Thus no attempt is made in the Apocalypse to picture by symbols the personal advent, but in place of it he is beheld in his great white throne—*just come;* with which agree the words of Jesus himself, "When the Son of man shall *come* in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, *then* shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." (Matt. xxv. 31.)

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* First Resurrection, *ut supra*, pp. 6, 7, note D.

OBJECTION FOURTH:

When the beloved disciple beheld the redeemed in vision, sitting on thrones, with golden crowns upon their heads, and heard the halleluiahs which they poured into the ear of the Lamb, the last note, it seems, of their song of praise was, "WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH." (Rev. v. 10.)

This passage is quoted in almost every defence of the pre-millennial theory, but without an attempt to show that it proves any thing which we deny—as if the sound of it were quite enough to convince the reader that it belonged exclusively to that scheme. Now, in order to make this out, two things must be proved. First, That the reign here anticipated means the personal reign of those who sang this song of praise to the Lamb; and secondly, That it means their reign *during the thousand years*, and not in the eternal state. Many, who reject the pre-millennial theory as wholly unscriptural, understand the words "We shall reign on the earth," to refer to the glory of the redeemed in "the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."* In this case, the passage proves nothing in favour of the pre-millennial scheme. But I am not satisfied with this view of the passage. I agree with *Durham*, *Marck*, *Vitringa*, *Lowman*, and the majority (I take it) of exact expositors, who take this to be a vision of the Church, not in its disembodied state, but *as it now is*, *upon earth*, with the Lamb slain enthroned in the midst of it, and "inhabiting its praises" (Ps. xxii. 3), "sending forth *into all the earth*" those mystic "horns and eyes" of his—that sevenfold plenitude of *power* and *wisdom*, for the ingathering of his elect "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," and for the protecting, ruling, and perfecting of the gathered Church "unto the day of redemption." In this case, the anticipations of the Church, in the words we are considering, relate more to the *ultimate triumphs of Christ's cause* upon earth *during the present state*, than to the glorified condition of the saints. It is not "the spirits of just men made perfect," anticipating this resumption of their bodies in the resurrection-state, and their reign with Christ in glory on the earth when that state arrives; but it is the infant Church of Christ in flesh and blood, struggling against "tribulation, and persecution, and peril, and sword, for Christ's sake, killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter, unable, without miracles of divine interposition and relief, to survive the combined and protracted assaults of her enemies, much less to overpower them, to carry all before her, to subdue the world under her religion and her Lord, and reign with undisputed sway over the whole earth. Yet this is anticipated as certain, and joyously sung by the choir of throned elders—bright earnest of the "reign for ever and ever," when "that which is *perfect* being come, that which is *in part* shall be done away." *

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* "What," says *Mr. Fairbairn*, "can we make of the ascription of praise from the elders, representatives of a redeemed Church, when they give glory to the Messiah, as having 'made them kings and priests unto God, and they shall reign upon the earth?' Or what of the closing scenes, where the evangelist sees a new heaven and a new earth in the room of those which had passed away, and the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven to settle on the renovated earth? . . . . . We cannot doubt who are kings and priests, or with whom they are to reign; and it were surely strange if there could be any doubt of the theatre of their dominion, when it is so expressly denominated *the earth*." (Typology, vol. i. pp 467, 478.)

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* See the extracts from *Marckius* and *Vitringa* on this sense of the passage, pp. 437, 438, note.

OBJECTION FIFTH:

Christ assures the twelve, that "in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory; they also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30.) Now, "what (asks *Mr. Elliott*) is the *regeneration* (παλιγγενεσια) spoken of, but the state when Christ shall make all things new (Rev. xxi. 5), and this earth be restored to paradisiacal blessedness? In which state, however, and over which renovated earth, Christ here declares that the apostles (evidently raised from the dead for the purpose) shall, together with their Lord, have the authority and government."*

Expressed in this general form, there is nothing here which I am disposed to object to. But the passage is adduced to show that the state of *glory* will be co-existent with the restored nationality of the Israelites; and that, while inhabiting Palestine in flesh and blood, they will be under the rule of the twelve glorified apostles. To such an interpretation I demur. Not a single commentator that I can find takes this view of it, or seems to have imagined that such a construction might be put upon it.†

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* Hor. Apoc. *ut supra*, iv. 207. See also Birks, *ut supra*, p. 333.

† This remark applies even to *Bengel*, who of all expositors of note was the most likely, from his prophetical opinions, to take some such view. After stating that, as "in the time of the Judges, the Israelites were under a theocracy, so in the *prior* millennium, their enemies being cut off, the restored Israel will have Judges, Isa. i. 26," he adds, "*But this promise to the apostles looks beyond that.*" (Bengel, by the way, with one or two early students of prophecy, took "the thousand years of Satan's binding," Rev. xx. 2, 3, to be not the same with "the thousand years of the saints' reign with Christ," verse 4; and thought the one millennium would be *prior* to the other, and both before the second advent. In this respect, their views coincide so far with those of *Perry* and others.)

Nor do I find pre-millennialists themselves making any use of it in their scheme. Several of them draw out the details of the millennial kingdom, as they expect it to be, with considerable minuteness. *Mr. Elliott*, for example, does so.* But though he opens up a vision of earth and heaven—mortal and immortal—meeting together, blending seemingly into one, or interlacing each other so that the mind is bewildered as it tries to fix the fleeting shadows of his half-poetic, half-mystic, half-expository representation —this feature of twelve thrones, one for each of the apostles, from which to exercise rule over the twelve tribes of the re-constituted Israel in Palestine, forms no part of it. He speaks of "the perfected company of the redeemed, the general assembly, the glorified sons of God," being "entrusted with the new earth's government, subordinately to Christ himself." But nothing of these "apostolic thrones" appears in his description. Even Mr. Birks, though he deduces an argument from this passage, seems not to rely greatly on it, but merely says it points, *not obscurely*, to the truth he is contending for (that the advent will precede the millennium.)

"Lest," says CALVIN, "the disciples should think they had lost their pains, and repent of the course they had entered on, Christ reminds them that the glory of his kingdom, which as yet lay hidden, would come into manifestation, as if he had said, There is no reason why this mean condition should discourage you; for I, who scarcely have a place among the basest, shall yet mount the throne of majesty. Wait, then, for a little while, till the time for the manifestation of my glory shall arrive. What, then, does he promise them? Why, that they should be partakers of the same glory. For by assigning them *thrones*, from which they should judge the twelve tribes of Israel, he compares them to ambassadors or prime ministers, who in a royal council occupy the first seats. We know that the apostles were chosen twelve in number, that thereby it might be seen that God designed by Christ to gather together the scattered remnant of his people. This was the highest dignity; but it lay as yet concealed. Christ therefore suspends their expectations till the final manifestation of his kingdom, when they should at length reap the fruit of their election. For though by the preaching of the gospel the kingdom of Christ shone partially forth, there can be no doubt that Christ here speaks of the last day. . . . . In order to prevent mistake, Christ distinguishes between the commencement and the consummation of his kingdom." *

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* Hor. Apoc. *ut supra*, pp. 240–242.

"Then," says Scott, "he will make all things new, and the apostles will be his assessors in judgment; the world and the Church will be judged according to their doctrine, and they will appear distinguished from all their brethren in Christ."

"In the day," says Bishop Hall, "of the great restoration of all things, when the elect shall enter on a new life of unspeakable glory, even in that great and dreadful day when the Son of man shall sit upon his throne of majesty to judge the quick and the dead, then shall ye, my apostles, who are now despicable and mean, have the honour to sit upon several thrones, to second and assist this awful act of final judgment on the rebellious Israel." †

I quote these passages, not as expressing the sense of our Lord's words precisely as I should myself perhaps do; but as showing how, amidst varying shades of thought upon the "twelve tribes" and "twelve thrones," the same general idea prevails among expositors. Calvin's remarks coincide most with the view which I have been led to take of the passage

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* In Nov. Test. Comm. *ad loc.*—See also Marckii Expect. Glor. Fut. J. Chr. L. iii. c. xvi. § xii.—xiv.

† Quoted in Scott's Commentary. To much the same effect, Doddridge.

OBJECTION SIXTH:

In 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24, "three events are specified, separated by two marks of sequence in time. There is the resurrection of Christ, the first-fruits—an event prior by at least 1800 years to the second advent. There is afterward, at the coming of Christ, the resurrection of them that are His. Afterward there cometh the end, at the final resurrection. 'Christ the first-fruits; afterward (επειτα) they that are Christ's at his coming; then (ειτα) cometh the end,' &c. The terms of order naturally imply an interval like that between the resurrection of Christ and his advent, to ensue between the advent itself and that end in which death is to be destroyed."[*]

This argument, though found in almost every defence of the pre-millennial theory, is of the slenderest possible description.

"The words ειτα and επειτα" says a sensible reviewer quoted by Dr. Hamilton, "as well as their English equivalents (*then* and *afterwards*), when they happen to denote sequence of time, may denote any sequence you please, either immediate or remote, either that in which the events follow each other rapidly, or that in which they follow each other slowly and consequently at long intervals. You may say properly enough, a man winked *first* with the one eye, *then* with the other, and *after that* with the other again; and you may say with equal propriety, the world was *first* made, *then* was it drowned with the deluge, and *afterwards* it will be consumed by fire. The *then* and the *afterwards* are precisely the same in both these cases, although in the one case each interval of the sequence occupies only the twinkling of an eye, while in the other it occupies many centuries, or even millenniums. There is therefore nothing to be made of the stubborn adverbs. Interrogate them as you please, you are never a whit the wiser. They will not tell you either how short or how long how near or how distant; and, if you want information on these points, you must look to some other quarter."[*]

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[*] Birks' Proph. Emp., *ut supra*, pp. 339, 340.

"I cannot," says *Mr. Gipps*, "find any passage in which the interval of time between two events, whose order is marked by the word ειτα, *then*, is a *long* interval.[†] We have in this chapter two verses in which two events are noticed, that follow one another in order, but are separated by a *long interval*—viz., v. 23, in which the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of his people are noticed; and v. 46, in which the succession of the spiritual bodies of believers after their natural bodies is noticed. In each of these verses, the event in the first part is separated from that which follows in the latter part, by a *long interval;* and in each the order of time is denoted, not by the adverb ειτα, but by *another* adverb επειτα. And we may observe, that while there is an order of succession between the three events noticed in verses 23 and 24 (namely, 1. The resurrection of Christ; 2. The resurrection of his people; 3. The end); yet the adverb επειτα —denoting the order of succession between the *first* two (Christ's resurrection and that of his people) where the interval is *long*—is no longer used to denote the order of *succession* in the *latter* two events (the resurrection of Christ's people, and the end), but is changed for ειτα, as if for the purpose of marking to us that though there is a regularity of *order* in the three events thus noticed, yet there is not a regularity as to the *length of interval;* so that the adverb suited to denote a *long* interval (επειτα) in v. 23, is changed in v. 24 to ειτα, an adverb suited to denote a *short* interval, as the instances given below, I think, prove. As far, therefore, as we can collect any argument from the use of the adverbs, επειτα and ειτα, in this passage, it would lead me to conclude, that while the interval between the *first two* events—the resurrection of Christ, and that of his people—has been in our view *long;* the interval between the *last two*—the resurrection of Christ's people and the *end*—will be one which in our view would be esteemed short."*

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[*] Modern Millennarians, pp 187, 188.

[†] "Upon that point, however, the reader can judge for himself by referring to the following passages, which are, I believe, all in which ειτα occurs:—Mark iv. 17, 28, viii. 25; Luke viii. 12; John xiii. 5, xix. 27, xx. 27; 1 Cor. xii. 28, xv. 5, 7; 1 Tim. ii. 13, iii. 10; Heb. xii. 9; James i 15."

OBJECTION SEVENTH:

The "rest," or *sabbatism* (σαββατισμος), which the apostle says "remaineth for the people of God" (Heb. iv. 9)—meaning the departed saints—seems to indicate some *septenary* of time, the which could scarce be any other than the *seventh millennium of the world.* Now, without entering at all minutely into chronological details, it is evident from our present actual position near the end, on the lowest computation, *of the world's sixth millenary*, that were we to postpone its commencement yet a thousand years—in other words, were we to admit of a millennium of earthly bliss still intervening before the departed saints' entrance on *their* promised blessedness—then their rest, even though this millennium were to begin instantly, would be postponed long after the opening of the seventh millennary; and consequently be, in the more proper and etymological sense of the term, no sabbatism."†

I should not have noticed this objection, but for the quarter from which it comes. The following is, I think, more than sufficient reply:

1. It is incredible to me that the blessedness of departed saints should be expressed by any term denoting a limited period of time, and expressly intended to be understood of that definite period. Even pre-millennialists themselves, when asked how it could be said of the risen and glorified saints that "they lived and reigned with Christ *a thousand years*," are wont to reply that this period has no reference to *them* and their *glory*, but only to the mortal and terrestrial department of the kingdom under

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* First Resurrection, pp. 46, 47, note Q—slightly altered in the style.

† *Elliott's* Hor. Apoc., *ut supra*, iv. 215.

their rule; and though this looks too like a door by which to escape from a difficulty, seeing it is expressly said that it is the living and reigning of *these saints themselves* which is to last thus long, still it shows that the difficulty is felt, and must somehow be got over. But here Mr. Elliot will have us to take this "sabbatism"—though "applied (he says) to the departed saints' expected rest"—to express a *septenary* of time, and founds on this supposed sense an argument for its reference to the seventh millennium of the world!

2. Independently of this, the argument is without a shadow of foundation. For God's holy day, as every one knows, is called the *Sabbath*, not from its being a *septennary* of time, but from the *rest* enjoined and enjoyed on it—(from שָׁבַת, *to rest*). From this came the Greek word to *sabbatize*, or keep sabbath (σαββατιζω, Exod. xvi. 30, lxx.), and our word here, *sabbatism*, or sabbath-keeping, meaning, as many think, the celestial and eternal repose of the saints with God,* but as I rather think—with Calvin and others—the *present rest* which is the portion of believers in Jesus, of which it is said in the same chapter (ver. 3), "We who have believed *do enter* into rest" (εισερχομεθα—οἱ πιστευσαντες), and of which Jesus himself says, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Of this rest, heaven is indeed the consummation; but so far from its being untasted here, it is a repose to which (as Calvin says on the passage) God invites us every day.

These, I think, are all the objections to the doctrine of this book deserving of notice, which have not been anticipated and replied to in the two foregoing parts. I had intended to take up one or two more, which Mr. Birks urges. But they all resolve themselves, I see, into one, already examined pretty fully in the first part of this volume—namely, that the New Testament affords no ground for expecting "*universal holiness* to last for a long time before the Lord shall come," and gives no intimation that the corn-field of the Church will be *cleansed* or *purified* long before the separation in judgment.* In this I perfectly agree. I expect no period—long or short—of "universal holiness" before Christ come. *Does Mr. Birks himself expect it*—during the millennium? I do not expect the corn-field of the Church to be "cleansed or purified" before Christ comes, in the only sense in which the parable referred to by Mr. Birks (of the wheat and tares) announces a purification, namely, that *all the tares*, or children of the wicked one, will be purified out of "the *world*, which is the field." Does Mr. Birks himself believe that not one child of the wicked one, one unregenerate professing Christian, will be found on the earth during the millennium? If not, his argument is inept.

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* So *Bengel:* In tempore sunt sabbata multa; sed tum erit *sabbatismus*, agitatio quietis una, perfecta, æterna, Verbale emphaseos plenissimum. . . . . . Non erit elementare sabbatum in cœlo, sabbato quippe terrestri labore; sed quies perpetua, &c.

All such arguments proceed, as I have shown, upon *exaggerated views of the difference between the present and the millennial era.* Pre-millennialists themselves are forced to admit that there will be tares among the wheat—bad as well as good—a mixture—on the earth during the millennium. They may "feign submission," but of the root of the matter, many, according to their own admission, will be destitute. And what is this but to allow that *the only difference between that time and this will be one of* DEGREE. Now, the New Testament brings out into bold relief, not differences of *degree* but of *kind. The grand distinctions held forth and dwelt on in the New Testament are two—the distinction between* what we familiarly call NATURE and GRACE, on the one hand, *and between* GRACE and GLORY on the other. Corresponding with these subjective distinctions in the successive conditions of THE CHURCH, is the sublime objective distinction between the FIRST and the SECOND comings of THE CHURCH'S LORD—the first in humiliation, to redeem her unto God by his blood, and translate her out of *nature* into *grace;* the second, in majesty, to "perfect that which concerneth her," and exalt her from *grace* unto *glory.* What has the *millennium* to do with such magnificent distinctions as these? Nothing. It is just *the state of grace* developed more widely and fully than in the early stages of the gospel. As such, *it would never fail to be mentioned at all*, save where it was the express object of the inspiring Spirit to hold forth *prophetically* the fortunes of the Church upon earth, and show it passing into the perfect and eternal state. In the *Apocalypse*, for example, we have a right, so to speak, to look for the millennium, if there is to be one at all. And there, accordingly, we do find it, but nowhere else.

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* Four Proph. Emp., *ut supra*, p. 333.

I have had occasion to observe, too, that the *commencement* and the *close* of this latter day will, in all likelihood, follow the law of all the other great periods in the history of the Church, being *gradual* and *uncertain;* so cutting off every plea for slothful security, and keeping the Church in its fitting attitude of expectancy. "Ethiopia (or Cush) shall *soon* stretch out," or "*hasten* her hands unto God" תָּרִיץ Ps. lxviii. 31), said the Psalmist between two and three thousand years ago. But is it done yet? "Behold, I come *quickly*," said the Redeemer himself, nearly two millenniums since; but still "the heavens retain him," for "the times of restitution of all things spoken of by the prophets" have not arrived. These "*soons*" and "*quicklies*" of Scripture are not, it seems, to be measured by our impatient arithmetic. Events should have taught us this, but they have not; and those who are trying to learn the lesson, because they tremble at the word of the Lord, are charged with lulling the Church and the world to sleep—as if their motto were, "The Lord delayeth his coming" But "let God be true and every man a liar." "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

CONCLUSION.

Here I close this investigation. I have shown, I think, under a number of heads, that the pre-millennial scheme is at variance with the word of God—that it proceeds upon crude and arbitrary principles of interpretation, while it shrinks from carrying out even these to their legitimate results—that as a system it wants coherence, and is palpably defective, making no provision for some of the most important events which are to occur in the history of our race—and that its bearing on some of the most precious doctrines of God's word are painful and perilous.

These are strong things to say. Could I have taken the view of this system which many do who never examined it —that it is a harmless one, which it matters little whether we embrace or reject—I have too much dislike to oppose brethren in the common salvation, to have sent forth such a volume as this. It is because I saw in it *elements which at once fascinate the carnal and attract the spiritual*, that I thought it of consequence to sift it. And none of the least of my motives, in undertaking this inquiry, was the desire to rescue "THE BLESSED HOPE" of the Saviour's appearing from the erroneous and repulsive circumstances with which this doctrine invests it, and which have had the effect of frightening away the Church from an expectation which *nothing else* can compensate the loss of. "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me," is a sound dear to all that love his name They "love his appearing," because they love Himself. To put any thing in the place of it is not good. Nor will it succeed. For those who preach him bringing his reward with him, will prevail, as indeed they ought.

Nor is it in regard to the personal appearing of the Saviour only that pre-millennialists will and ought to prevail against all who keep it out of sight. There is *a range of truth* connected with it, which necessarily sinks out of its scriptural position and influence, whenever the coming of Christ is put out of its due place. I refer to the RESURRECTION as a co-ordinate object of the Church's hope, and to all the truths which circle around it, in which there is a power to stir and to elevate, which nothing else, substituted for it, can ever possess. The resurrection-life of the Head, as now animating all his members, and at length quickening them from the tomb, to be for ever with Him—these, and such like, are truths, in the presentation of which premillennialists are cast in the mould of Scripture, from which it is as vain as it were undesirable to dislodge them. Pity only that they mar their own work. Many of them are dear to me in the Lord, and all the more for their warm affection to the appearing of his Person, and the truths therewith connected. And oh! will it not be gladsome when those who "have fallen out by the way" about his coming, shall be found together "walking with Him in white," their questions ended and their jarrings drowned in their common hallelujahs "unto Him that loved them?"

And it will soon be. "A little while and ye shall not see me; and again, *a little while* and ye shall see me." "Though he tarry, WAIT FOR HIM." "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." Meanwhile, "until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense." (Cant. iv. 6.)

" Sed forte sic in longam nimis protenditur spes magna de illustri *adventu Domini* ad plenissimam suorum *ἀπολύτρωσιν* et *universale judicium* Ipsi a Patre commissum! Fateor certe longius differri quam sibi vulgus hominum in Ecclesia Christiana futurum esse persuadet. Et ipse quoque ego hac de re non nisi trepide scribo; etiamsi in clara veritatis luce minus esse videatur quod metuam. *Amo apparitionem Domini*, nec *peto moram finis*, sperans *me misericordiam inventurum in die illo:* Fidei tamen et prudentiæ esse existimo, spatium dare Deo opus suum in hic terris consummandi antequam claudat sæcula; et nobis *imperiose* non *vindicare arbitrium constituendorum temporum Mundi et Ecclesiæ;* quod solius Dei esse nos docuit Dominus. Opus enim quod Deus in hic terris exhibere decrevit, et cujus exhibendi caussa Sæcula condidit, est magnum, *mirabile*, *paradoxum* (Hab. i. 5); quod nostri officii est non ex animi nostri parvitate, sed Divina majestate, magnitudine et consiliorum ejus vastitate ac profunditate metiri. Parvitatis enim animi nostri argumentum est, tempora illa propria, quæ Deus exequendis consiliis suis destinavit, intra angustos constringere terminos; impatientiæ autem et incredulitatis, nostris eadem cogitationibus anticipare, et dicere cum Judæis carnalibus: *Acceleret, propere producat opus suum ut videamus* (Jes. v. 19). Fidei contra et *σωφροσύνης* est, *non festinare* (Jes. xxviii. 16). Novit enim Deum, licet *cunctari* videatur, non cunctari vere (Hab. ii. 3, 4); sed *suo tempore* omnia agere *pulchre*. An putamus vere, Deum Regnum Filii sui, per quatuor nimirum millia promissum, tandem in hoc Orbe voluisse exhibere et per continuam luctam ad perfectionem aliquam perducere, ut illud Mundo ostensum mox rursus dispareat? Sed ipse ego nolo tempori hujus Mundi plus spatii dare, quam Prophetiæ suadent, extra quas nihil sapio."—VITRINGA, *Anak. Apoc.* (ad cap. xx. 1–15, sect. xvii.)

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- 1-year loans may be recharged by bringing books to NRLF
- Renewals and recharges may be made 4 days prior to due date.

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